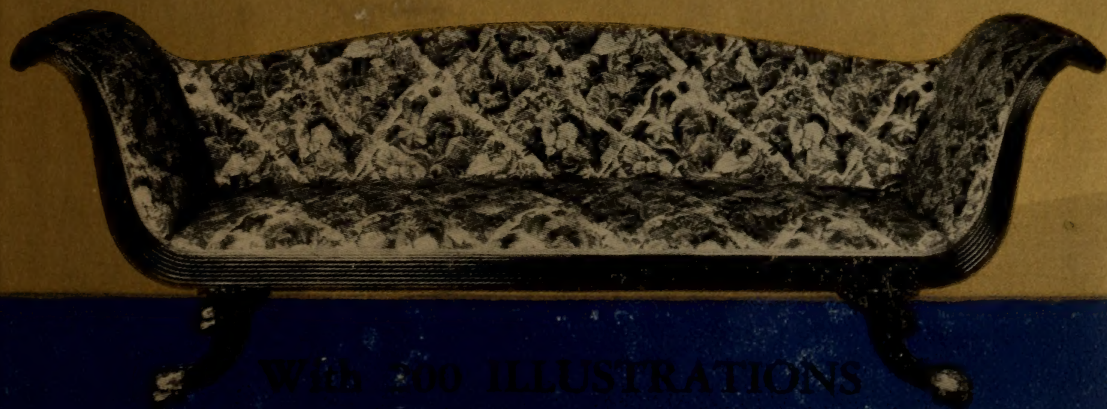


The Practical Book of
**AMERICAN
FURNITURE**
and Decoration

THE STANDARD AUTHORITATIVE GUIDE

JACOBEAN • WILLIAM and MARY • QUEEN ANNE
CHIPPENDALE • HEPPLEWHITE • SHERATON



With 200 ILLUSTRATIONS

Edward Johnston Holloway

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF AMERICAN FURNITURE AND DECORATION

Colonial and Federal

by

EDWARD STRATTON HOLLOWAY

THIS authoritative and practical book will enable anyone to recognize and appreciate all the principal types of American furniture. The author, who is an expert on the subject of furniture and interior decoration, traces the origin of the various styles and explains how American craftsmen have altered basic English and continental designs to fit American tastes and requirements. All the "aristocrats" of the furniture craft are described in full, including such famous names as Chipendale, Hepplewhite, Shearer, Sheraton and many others. By the practical method of illustrating and treating the furniture of each style separately and in the proper chronological order, Mr. Holloway makes it easy to distinguish the characteristics of each.

The last portion of the book is devoted to the problem of successful interior decoration and presents many valuable hints and suggestions for choosing and combining furniture and decorative accessories effectively. The book is illustrated throughout with more than two hundred excellent photographs.

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*THE PRACTICAL BOOK
OF
AMERICAN FURNITURE
AND DECORATION
COLONIAL AND FEDERAL*

LIPPINCOTT'S PRACTICAL BOOKS FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF HOME LIFE

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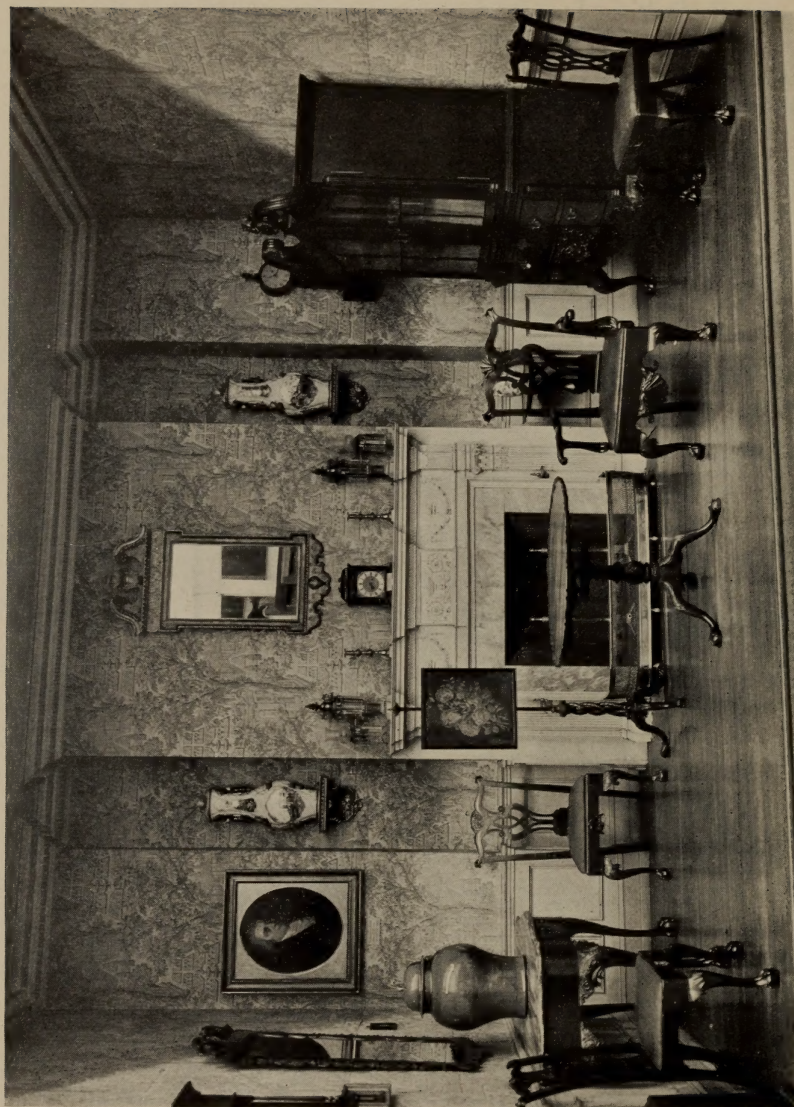
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THE PHILADELPHIA ROOM, AT THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM, MEMORIAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF AMERICAN FURNITURE AND DECORATION COLONIAL AND FEDERAL

BY
EDWARD STRATTON HOLLOWAY

AUTHOR OF

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JOINT AUTHOR OF "THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF INTERIOR DECORATION"

WITH 200 ILLUSTRATIONS

A NEW EDITION, REVISED



PHILADELPHIA & LONDON
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1937

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO
HOWARD REIFSNYDER
IN APPRECIATION OF
FRIENDSHIP AND
READY HELP

1937
AND AGAIN TO
HIS MEMORY



FOREWORD

TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE aim of the writer has been to supply at a moderate cost a convenient book for *use*: to furnish the reader with a full equipment for a knowledge and understanding of American furniture, the appropriate interior, and its decoration: to place before him a large body of illustrations, carefully selected, reproduced with especial clearness, and of a size showing construction and ornament.

Such a volume is equally necessary to those whose interest lies in original furniture and to those who wish to purchase reproductions that adequately represent their originals.

By the practical method here adopted of illustrating and treating the furniture of *each style by itself* and *in proper chronological order* it becomes easy to distinguish the characteristics of each furniture-group, and so quickly to "place," by the recognition of those qualities, any piece of furniture that one sees. These consecutive styles soon lie out in the mind like a map, upon any location in which a mental finger can unhesitatingly be set down. Transition pieces then cause no difficulty, for the characteristics of two styles in the one piece are recognised, and the article is assigned to its natural place between the two modes. To a degree that did not obtain in England, there was sometimes here the persistence of certain features of one style into the next, and this makes it all the more necessary to understand which features belong to each.

Those who become interested in the subject of our furniture usually acquire considerable knowledge of the furniture itself and some scattered particulars

regarding its origin. Many collectors, even, do not go much beyond this point—simply because of the amount of labour and research through many sources that hitherto has been necessary to gather together the required information. But if we care for the furniture that is our heritage and would be knowledgeable regarding it, we shall wish to know what made it what it was—in the classical language of the street, “how it got that way.”

Probably it would make for the advancement of human knowledge if we did not quite so early in life drop childhood’s insistent “why?” In what respects do the styles differ each from the other, and why did each appear? Are they mere “sports,” or, like the men who developed them, have they *ancestry*, have they *cause*? A flower may bloom overnight, but the root, the stem, the leaf, the bud were there.

In previous books no special attempt has been made to trace the features composing our American styles to the sources from which they came. New modes are a development from some preceding suggestion. A novel idea enters, and presently the old is transformed into the new. And those ideas or movements were not confined to one country—they were international: yet American furniture has not previously been regarded in its broad relation to all other furniture. Because of our enormous modern facilities we habitually undervalue the amount of intercourse existing in the past between the various countries of Europe and between them and the Orient: because of the wide knowledge now accessible to us we customarily forget the *power* that knowledge, when less accessible, possessed.

American furniture contains elements from all over Europe and from Asia: and American craftsmen made

variations in these through their own individuality. Do we care for our furniture and yet care little to know what made it what it was?

Each sort, or style, of decoration and furniture was evolved by man to satisfy his own particular needs and his sense of beauty: we cannot therefore understand the decoration and furniture of any period unless we know something of humanity at that particular time and the conditions besetting it. What we need of this necessary "background" is concisely supplied here; not too much of it—an historical essay is not necessary—but the salient points bearing on furniture and decoration.

We must all feel a sense of fatigue at the extensive exploitation of the *primitive* American furniture; especially now that we are forced to pay beggaring prices for what was made for, and is essentially appropriate to, only the simplest interior or the kitchen. While it and its accompanying environment—like all things simple, straightforward and honest—have their naïf charm, we ourselves live in an age very grown up indeed, and it seems quite time that we should turn our attention to something in every way more worthwhile, more suitable to our cultivation and manner of living.

With all our prosperity, our new country naturally possessed no such palatial establishments as the "great" houses of England. The sophistication of the social set of Mrs. Bingham of Philadelphia, and of like sets in other communities, was sporadic rather than usual; with all our healthy appetite for life and the good things thereof, a certain ascetic strain did undeniably pervade our American character. This may partially have been due to stern traditions growing out of the endured hardships of colonisation; it certainly owed a great part of its existence to the religions of our forebears.

In Philadelphia, Quakers and "World's People" strove and throve side by side, each bearing their admirable part in the city's life and progress. It may well be doubted if the Quaker succeeded in "holding down" the social set, but that he had great influence upon the character of the whole Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware section is indubitably true. In Boston, the less tolerant Puritan, in his earnest but wrong-headed endeavours to scotch the devil, almost succeeded in spoiling the joy of living for his fellows, but could not spoil it utterly. The sense of beauty will not die, and that it found its fitting expression in New England we shall see.

The result of this ascetic strain was that what most Americans regard as an undue degree of ornament was not here indulged in, and that in American furniture there is consequently an "atmosphere" differing from that of any other country. Personally I feel that repression not to have been all a gain: that, thereby, we have, as a nation, become unused to, and so unappreciative of, some of the loveliest things devised by man.

But this is beside the point; to sum up our actual output, elaborate pieces are rather the exception; there were very many of decidedly handsome character; and others of equal quality in handiwork but of simpler form or ornament admirably adapted to the average home. Our product, then, may be regarded as balanced and exceedingly well suited to our varying needs—in the present as well as in the past.

It is amazing, too, to find the great number of variations in form and ornamental detail that we constantly encounter. Furniture was then made not by machines but by *men*: and man when he works individually is invariably possessed by the itch to create, to

develop his own idea, to express himself, and not literally to copy. The cabinet-maker of the older day was working in the wood itself; and even when he followed his model was gaining an appreciation of the capabilities of his material, a mastery of proportion and of detail, that made him potentially at least a designer and so able to put life and vigour into his work; while the bolder spirit often made innovations and developments of his own.

Was it because of his intimate contact with material and the personal carrying out of design that the product of the unassuming early craftsman and the results of his modifications were mostly right, while those of the present-day designer, who works on paper, are mostly wrong? We cannot blame the difference entirely upon machinery, for machinery at least does handsomely what it is set to do.

Whatever the cause, the fact remains that if the phrase "verify your quotations" is an axiom in literature, to verify commercial period furniture by original examples is no less necessary—for commonly the more they vary the worse they are!

With the enlightenment of the public by means of the continual illustration of authentic furniture in books and magazines, we may hope that the householder and the trade will soon be satisfied with "straight reproductions only"—in which case we may be sure that the manufacturer will be quick to supply more of them than we find at present.

The writer is in complete accord with the ideal that each generation should produce its own decoration and furniture—expressive of itself and satisfying its special requirements. In the past this spontaneously occurred, each style being a natural growth; but a hundred years

ago inspiration failed. The situation as regards furniture is well summed up by Mr. Huger Elliott, of the Metropolitan Museum, when he says, "It is a trifle mortifying to have to confess that we prefer almost any chair made before 1828 to any designed since that time."

An influx of the modern French decoration is under way, and as it bids fair to assume large proportions, we should sympathetically weigh its merits as an earnest creative movement. As a decoration it is restrained in colour, using only a few stronger accents: it is full of spirit: many of its textiles are fascinating: it has commandeered a large number of materials and is making excellent use of them: the woods used are of the finest quality and often admirably combined: its lighting deserves the highest praise.

Furniture is by many admitted to be its least successful achievement and some of the most discriminating of the Parisian decorators are employing old furniture with the new decoration. This is a hint for those who may adopt the mode in America. The furniture there used is of course French—and we have our French derivations.

A word of caution may not be amiss: much bad work appears in Paris itself, and we may expect a great deal of it here. The style is successful when rightly handled, but it requires the greatest knowledge and discrimination for its successful use.

This volume is newly written and mentions the latest discoveries of previously unknown cabinet-makers, up to the time of going to press. For the privilege of including substantial portions of the last three chapters and some smaller sections from my recent series of articles appearing in *House and Garden*

I am much indebted to Richardson Wright, Esq., the editor of that valuable journal.

I have not hesitated to express—and pungently at times—my personal point of view. The reader is by no means forced to adopt those opinions, and may, by their expression, be stimulated to form his own; the facts are here given by which he may do so.

I cannot close this foreword without special reference to the warm human spirit of collectors and private owners who have made it possible for others to see and study and know fine furniture, through their loans and gifts to museums or by allowing writers the privilege of reproducing such pieces and others in their own homes; also to the staffs and associates of these museums and of libraries, who universally have shown more than courtesy and kindness in the real *coöperation* that encourages the writer to feel that the spirit in which he is doing what he can is appreciated and met.

Let me thank, then, for myself and my readers:

Howard Reifsnyder, Esq., for the privilege of reproducing so many pieces from his fine collection, none of which have appeared in any other volume; R. T. Haines Halsey, Esq., who has allowed me to show much furniture of our classic years; Dr. Samuel W. Woodhouse, Jr., not only for aid with illustrations but in appreciation of our many talks over old furniture; the institutions to which I have above referred—the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the New York Public Library, and the New York Historical Society; the Victoria and Albert Museum of London; the Concord Antiquarian Society; and those of my own city, the Pennsylvania Museum, the Library Company of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Free Library.

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EDWARD STRATTON HOLLOWAY

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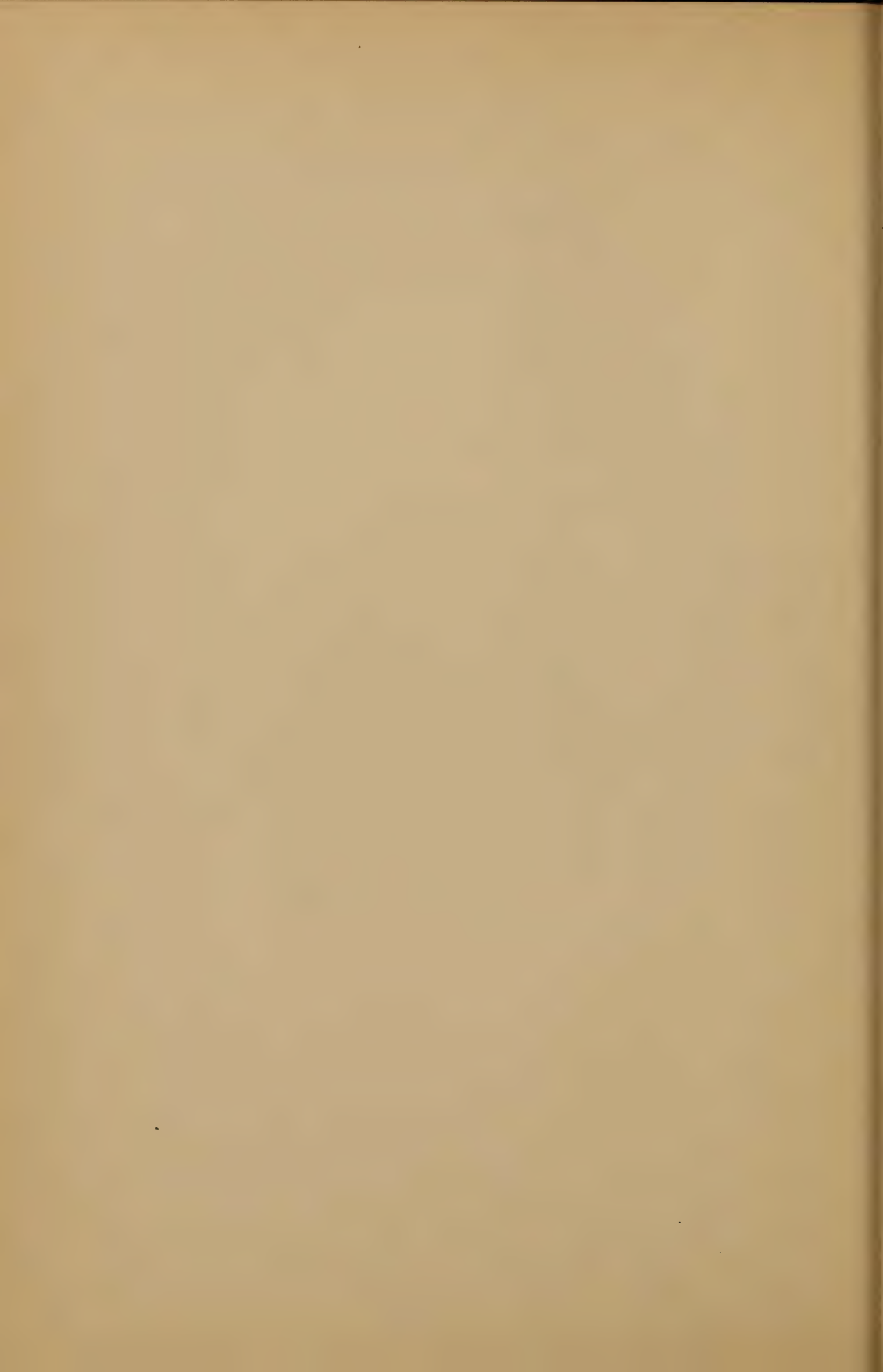
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FURNITURE

THE COLONIAL STYLES

JACOBEAN OR STUART

WILLIAM AND MARY

QUEEN ANNE-EARLY GEORGIAN

CHIPPENDALE



THE JACOBEOAN OR STUART PERIOD

IN GENERAL this is the period of the primitive furniture mentioned in the foreword, though an abundance of this was made in later years as well, and especially in country districts. Even the older colonies were still very young, and our ancestors were fighting stern conditions. These matters will be taken up in the next chapter, as the beginning of the new century affords a better start for a more detailed study of circumstances.

New civilisations like our own are, however, constantly surprising us by their productions. By the third quarter of the Seventeenth Century excellent furniture was already made in the New England centres, furniture that we may be sure is unquestionably American from the character of oak and other woods employed.

This furniture includes the cumbersome court-cupboards, press-cupboards, and wainscot chairs, few of which are extant and these almost wholly in museums or the possession of wealthy collectors. As they very closely followed the English types, which can be seen in any good book on English furniture, it scarcely seems necessary to illustrate them here and more advisable to take up the smaller pieces, which are favourites with collectors.

Some of them date after the close of the period in England. All the styles—and particularly the early ones—endured longer here, because under existing conditions they were not so quickly routed by new modes. And the remoter settlements naturally trailed the seaports; so that we shall always find pieces of an earlier

style made after the beginnings of a newer one, the types thus overlapping in point of time.

Native woods were used—oak, maple, pine, fruit- and nut-woods and, during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, walnut.

The most ornate furniture of these years was the high-backed chair. A very fine pair of them is illustrated in Plate 4. By tradition these particular chairs are said to be English, but one of the most experienced cabinet-making antique dealers in this country has been over them carefully and considers them to be of American origin. According to one account they were brought to America by William Penn on his last voyage here in 1699 and presented to his friend Henry Babcock. Another says that he made the gift in 1686. Either date would sufficiently correspond, as this type of chair—with the cresting set *between* the uprights and not above them—appeared in England between 1680 and 1685. In any event such chairs were made here as well as abroad.

This style derived from French chairs of Louis XIII (1610-43) developed on Dutch lines, and migrated to England. In these we see the oriental fashions of caning and the elaborate cresting of top and stretcher, which also will be treated in the origins of our furniture in the next chapter.

After the restoration of the monarchy in England under Charles II (May, 1660—February, 1685) the stiff, utilitarian furniture of Cromwell was quickly superseded by elaborate pieces, the features of which were derived from many sources, and of these the high-backed chair was among the most ornate. The spiral twist was first employed for the back-uprights but about 1680-85 this gave way to the turned supports

seen in the chairs illustrated. *Throughout* the reign, however, the Restoration chair, as it is often called, preserved the setting of the cresting *between* the uprights of the back: it was only with the incoming of James II (February, 1685--November, 1688) that the inferior, because less sturdy and durable, practice began of shortening the uprights and dowelling the cresting to the *tops* of the uprights.

Our American fashions followed the English in all these respects. In England the variety of these chairs, enduring through these two reigns and into that of William and Mary, is amazing, and in my "Practical Book of Learning Decoration and Furniture" I have illustrated the twenty main types and given particulars for the differentiation of the chairs of the three reigns.

During the first quarter of the eighteenth century the banister-back chair made its appearance—see Plate 6 B. This was a strictly American simplification of, and derivation from the chair we have been considering. In it the Spanish foot or the ball foot with shoe, especially characteristic of the William and Mary period, was employed and it is properly therefore considered in that period, being mentioned here, however, because its main constructive features consist of the turning so characteristic of the latter part of the Stuart period in England and which persisted here for some years. It appears in three of the illustrations to this chapter.

From the beginning of the New England settlement there were the Carver chairs with turned members and spindle backs and also the slat-backs. Very clumsy in the early examples, these were gradually refined and improved with advancing years and the slat-backs endured even into the Queen Anne-Early Georgian period. The best of these are attractive in their way

for simple furnishing but the point of view humorously expressed by *House and Garden* in the following may possibly be worth consideration:

Exponents of Early American furniture may protest the idea, but we have a notion that of all styles it is the one that offers the least comfort. In this iconoclastic thought we have recently been upheld by a young lady who has been staying in a house furnished completely with primitive American pieces of great value and rarity. She was literally obliged to go to bed to get comfortable!

Our forebears wore more clothes than we and they were raised under a harder regime. To them the slatback and the wooden-bottom chair were the veriest epitome of ease. But to our softer generation, schooled to expect comfort on every muscle, the rigors of some Early American pieces are distressing.

It might be well for us to undertake a more vigorous regime. And yet, when we compare our daily hectic lives with the relatively slow lives lived by the Colonial fathers, we begin to think that they were the ones to have an easy time of it. They may have thought hard chairs comfortable, but could they stand up under the strain of the lives many of us lead—the strain of noise and rush and fierce business competition? Perhaps they would be the ones who would flee to bed to find comfort and ease and tranquillity.

The chairs used in England under Cromwell appeared here likewise. These had leather-covered seats and backs.

Through all the various styles from the beginning down to the *Directoire* period there were sofas with backs composed of two or more chair-backs and always therefore recognisable as to style from these. When day-beds occurred they too may easily be placed from their embodying the characteristic features of the remaining furniture.

Of all articles of furniture the chest is the most

PLATE I



A. CARVED OAK CHEST-OF-DRAWERS
By Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum, New York City



Photograph by Dillon

B. SLANT-TOP WALNUT DESK IN TWO PARTS. 1700-1710
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.

PLATE 2



A. MAPLE BUTTERFLY TABLE. c. 1700
Probably made in Connecticut



B. PINE GATE-LEG TABLE. LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
Both by Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.
Photographs by Dillon

primitive. As the various nations of Europe emerged from the semi-barbarism of the Middle Ages—so far as furniture is concerned—the chest was first to appear. Primarily it is but a packing-case and hold-all, and if anything is removed from its lower portion its contents are in confusion. The instinct of man has always been both to decorate the chest and to improve it out of its inconvenient identity into other more desirable forms of furniture. First employed for travelling as well as stationary use, in Italy the chest speedily became the wonderful *cassone* of the Renaissance.

In America evolution had reached its first stage in the popular Hadley chest (found in the Massachusetts town of that name or its neighbourhood) where one to three drawers were added beneath the chest. The next step was the abandonment of the chest portion, as shown in Plate 1 A, where we have a veritable chest-of-drawers. Though there are here but two of them, three or four drawers were not uncommon.

These three forms overlapped in date—from about 1675 to 1710—but it was the chest-of-drawers that survived: and, then, for further convenience of access, this was lifted upon a frame or legs and became the highboy.

The Hadley chests resembled Plate 1 A in general appearance, though the design of conventionalised leaves and flowers was different and characteristic, and they were stained in black and colours.

Carving in England in Elizabethan and Jacobean days was bold rather than fine, and that of raised surfaces was usually the scratch-carving: these qualities persisted in our own product. Patterns were not carefully worked out, having the irregularities so familiar to us in the oriental rug. The oak chest illustrated is much better than many others in this

respect, but the differences in the completion of the designs at the two ends of the drawers will be noted. The decoration of these chests and chests-with-drawers was sufficiently various, many of them having the spindle or other Jacobean ornament, and others being panelled or in bold inlay. The handles were either metal drops or wooden knobs.

Plate 1 B shows a desk of shortly after the beginning of the new century, with typical Jacobean turned framework and recessed ring-turned stretcher. These desks were made either in two parts, as in the present instance, or in one. When in two pieces the base naturally projected to allow the setting in of the top. These handles are of the early willow type. More usually the desk-frames were constructed with continuous outside bracing as in the Butterfly table shown in Plate 2 A.

These "Butterfly" tables are great favourites with collectors. The illustrated fine original example is of about 1700. In general construction they are like the "joynt" (joined) stool of the period, with the wings added.

The gate-leg table has proved its universal usefulness. It made its first appearance in England during the years of Cromwell (1649-1660) and was later adopted here. In the well-preserved original specimen illustrated in Plate 2 B the handle has been supplied. They were usually wooden knobs, though drop handles also appeared.

In addition to the gate-leg a number of small tables of varying forms were used: these all have the Stuart turning and are therefore immediately recognisable.

The curious form of table illustrated in Plate 8 A, with projecting ends supported by a brace, and found in various sizes, made its appearance in the Stuart

period, and of course with Stuart framework. It persisted into later years, taking on the characteristics of the period when made.

No bedsteads of our earlier periods have been preserved. When of American make they were evidently merely of framework to be draped, or built in, or to be folded up into a closed wall-recess. Probably some were imported for the handsomer houses, but they have disappeared.

With the next period we enter upon a more advanced condition of living in our colonies, and consequently upon a development of the furniture in use.

WILLIAM AND MARY

ALTHOUGH we are so thoroughly conversant with the fact it is not always easy for us to realise to-day that until the Revolution we were all Englishmen. Indeed the whole contest with Great Britain, culminating in that war, was upon the basis that we were entitled to representation *because* we were Englishmen in America, and were not subjects.

Save in the colony of New Amsterdam, under Dutch ownership, our settlers were overwhelmingly of British birth, and except for the modifying influences of our new environment our people remained English in character and temperament. Even for a surprising length of time after our separation London continued to be for us the seat of fashion in architecture, decoration, furniture, and attire.

It is interesting to remember that till this day Englishmen have never regarded us as foreigners. Before me is an announcement on a rare-book catalogue, which reads:

This is an early copy of our Catalogue sent to American and Foreign Customers in advance of its circulation in Great Britain.

Note the distinction made.

In a publication that might almost be regarded as a British *institution*, "Whitaker's Almanac," immediately following the affairs of the British Empire are those of the United States of America, and *then* those of "Foreign Nations."

Just as, therefore, the chair- and cabinet-makers of York or Birmingham looked to London for their

styles in furniture, so likewise did the craftsmen of Boston and Philadelphia; and just as the workman of York might use his individuality and make certain local variations in the parent mode, so might the New England cabinet-maker vary from his prototype—and to a greater degree, because of greater isolation and divergent local conditions. Notwithstanding these minor changes, our furniture styles, until about the close of the eighteenth century, are the furniture styles of England, and should bear their names in references thereto. In the earlier periods this is commonly neglected, and consequently the reader not only gets little idea of the association and (notwithstanding all variations) practical identity of our furniture with the English styles, but—what is of the greatest moment to him—he secures no clear picture of the styles themselves, what furniture belongs to each, the differences between the various modes, or the order in which these modes appeared. These difficulties are all cleared away by the present systematic method of treatment.

In many cases the inspiration and the elements composing those English styles came from elsewhere, and those features will be indicated in this volume; for, as has already been intimated in the foreword, furniture, to be understood, must be broadly considered in its relation to other furniture—the mobiliary product of no nation was ever an entity that stood alone.

Briefly, then, we may consider the sources of the William and Mary style, and the conditions under which it originated and was adopted in America.

Late in 1688 James II fled from England and men of all parties united upon William, Prince of Orange, as King. On February 13, 1689, he and his wife Mary were proclaimed King and Queen. Constitutional

government had been established in England: William was its first parliamentary King. Nevertheless he showed the strength of his own hand. Government was still essentially aristocratic, but wealth had been accumulated through trade by many of those of the middle classes and these were also now beginning to give attention to the adornment of their homes. The fact that the Bank of England was established and the modern system of finance introduced during this reign evidences the consideration given to commercial interests. And England was now a power of the first rank.

Though their rule was disturbed by conspiracies and political intrigues, and though William devoted his life to the checking of the power of Louis XIV of France, both sovereigns were, through the providing of competent designers and workmen, encouragers of art. Thousands of French Huguenot craftsmen and weavers of the highest class had fled to England as the result of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, bringing with them a knowledge of the beautiful workmanship of France under its "Sun-King," Louis XIV. Among these was the eminent Daniel Marot, who accompanied William from Holland to England. Many fine establishments were erected, furniture was developed, and splendid fabrics were woven. In the realm of colour it was the most gorgeous period in English history—and doubtless some of its "harmonies" would displease the refinement of to-day. But these were vigorous times.

Now what were the furniture styles of William and Mary? They were one manifestation of the great Baroque movement which, like the Renaissance movement before it, had originated in Italy and swept through all Europe. Its characteristics were weight,

boldness, exuberance, and a large use of the curvilinear element, particularly the broken or "Flemish" curve.

William was a Dutchman: Mary was a Stuart, a daughter of James II, but, through years spent in Holland, thoroughly imbued with the Dutch tradition. Bearing in mind also that many Dutch courtiers and craftsmen had come with them and that much furniture was imported, we may naturally expect the Dutch influence to be predominant; and so it was, not only in this reign but in the succeeding one of Anne.

But we shall find a very absorbing interest in the manner in which this furniture came into existence.

THE ROMANTIC ORIGIN OF EARLY AMERICAN FURNITURE

Not many of us, since our geography days, have had occasion to recall the existence of the country down at the southwest corner of the map of Europe—little Portugal. Yet, a few centuries ago, Portugal was one of the great powers. And, what is of much interest to us in the story of our furniture, she had immense possessions in the East. Had it not been so the mobiliary art of both Europe and America would have been very different from what it became.

The story of that conquest is a romance. In 1486 Bartolomeo Diaz was driven by violent winds around the Cape of Good Hope and saw before him the waters of the great Indian Ocean. He was by chance the discoverer, but Albuquerque was the conqueror. Many of our present-day magnates feel that they are swinging great enterprises, but the ambition of Albuquerque was nothing less than the capture of the entire trade of the East and the establishment of a dominion. The means he took were of a beautiful and effective simplicity. From 1510 onward he captured and fortified bases at Aden, Ormuz, and Malacca, at the entrances

of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the China Sea into the Indian Ocean, strangled the trade of native vessels and took it to his own. And by way of thoroughness he captured other strategic points, such as Goa, Ceylon, and the Celebes. In 1516 the Portuguese were the first to arrive in China.

Goa, on the West coast of India, was made the Capital of all the Portuguese dominions. It became a great city for those days, with, it is said, two hundred thousand inhabitants, and its churches and palaces were famed throughout the East. From the Red Sea to China the Asiatic trade was in the grip of Portugal, and Lisbon became the great distributing centre for the products of the East.

If one were buying antique Portuguese furniture he would come upon pieces said to be in the "Goa factory style." These were either made there at the instructions of the Portuguese, or made in Portugal itself from patterns brought from Goa.

Such influence is of course reciprocal. The style of furniture used in the colony is in general that of the home land, but when pieces are made in the colony, and often by native workmen, they are sure to take on native characteristics. Furthermore, native furniture and textiles would be shipped home as curiosities and the home style would inevitably be modified by adopted colonial ideas.

But how did these ideas reach America? Often by roundabout and romantic methods; but the first influence was very simple. In 1662 Charles the Gay of England married Catherine of Braganza, the daughter of the King of Portugal, and, following her, "much Indo-Portuguese furniture, of ebony and blackwood, richly carved and with twisted columns, was imported." Evelyn tells us that "the Queen brought

over with her such Indian Cabinets as never had been seen before."

But how apt we are to forget that wisdom—and commerce—did not begin with this generation. As I had cause to remark in my book on "Learning Decoration and Furniture" the Low Countries were a *Receiving Station* for the furniture-ideas of the whole of southern and western Europe. An oriental characteristic brought to Portugal would speedily be taken up by its next-door-neighbour Spain; and, as the Low Countries were not finally freed from Spain till 1648, would thence be passed on to Holland, probably often lodging in France on its journey. It might appear in Italy as soon or earlier, through the Genoan trade with Spain or Lisbon. And Spain was of course saturated with Arabic *motifs* as well, introduced by the Moors.

And so these oriental ideas—and many others with them—went merrily floating through the furniture of Europe, causing the student no end of difficulty in tracing their ramifications. Such, for instance, was the shaped, flat stretcher of William and Mary English and American furniture: it is credited to Italy—but was it or was it not of oriental origin?

The mention of Spain, just now, recalls a proverb of that country: "He who knows he does not know is never a fool." To which might be added: especially when we are all in the same case. But we *do* know that some features were Eastern, and we strongly suspect others to be so. The use of caning in seating-furniture is undoubtedly oriental. So is the turned spiral twist, though the hand-carved twist appeared earlier. Heavy, putty-like spiral columns were favourites in Flanders early in the Baroque period. To be cautious, one might say that there is *every probability* that the Portuguese bulb, the so-called Spanish foot, and the

cresting of the backs of chairs and their stretchers are from the same oriental source; possibly also the spooning of the back. The cabriole leg is usually credited to China, and certainly existed there before its appearance in Europe, but its Western use *may* be but a rather natural development from the Baroque broken-curve leg previously used.

As we proceed we shall see how different Anglo-Dutch furniture must have been without these features—or even without some of them.

But the power of Portugal declined at home, and consequently also in the Orient, and that of Holland, then a vigorous nation, took its place. After about a century of occupation many of the colonies were wrested from Portugal by the Dutch. Ceylon, for instance, fell to them in the middle of the seventeenth century, and this colony is of importance to Americans, as we shall eventually see. (Page 88.)

The claw-and-ball foot, arriving in England about 1700 and in use in Queen Anne and especially in Chippendale times, is universally considered as being simply the Chinese dragon-claw clutching the pearl. As this, apparently, was first used in Holland, it probably came directly through Dutch enterprises in China. Other features may also have arrived direct.

Many phases of Stuart, William and Mary, and Queen Anne furniture resemble that of Louis XIII, Louis XIV, and Louis XV of France, but modified by the Dutch qualities of homeliness (or, rather, homeiness) and stolidity. Anything approaching lightness or buoyancy of spirit is totally lacking in the Dutch styles.

We cannot by any means condemn or decry these types, but if we do not allow the sentimentalism of long association to close our eyes we shall see it as it is—

less majestic and fine than the furniture of Louis Quatorze, far less deft, graceful, elegant, and charming than that of Louis Quinze. In short, it is Burgher furniture as compared with that of King and Courtier; Amsterdam or the Hague as contrasted with Paris (see Plate 9). Nor is it as fine in conception and design as the later English and American furniture of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

But it is good furniture; often beautiful in its own way, homelike, steadfast, and excellent to live with; especially to those who have not trained their perceptions to the point that they are satisfied only by the highest forms of art.

And now what of the America of the period?

THE EARLY COLONIES

In considering anything in the past we should never relax in our attention to dates. Even alone they give us much information, and a greater observation of them would have saved writers many assertions, on their face absurd. In the present instance they will instantly make us see how exceedingly new was our new land at this period.

William took the throne in 1688. Though the Swedes and Dutch had arrived earlier in the Philadelphia neighbourhood, Penn had landed from *The Welcome* only six years before—in 1682. Governor Sayle's settlement in South Carolina was made in 1670. The first extant view of what is now New York—about 1642—shows a fort, a windmill, and a few small houses. The city was not finally surrendered to England till 1674. The earliest settlement of Virginia, Jamestown, in 1607, was practically annihilated by sickness and starvation and it was not till

1613 that it could be said that "Englishmen had secured a fairly firm foothold in the Red Man's land." The Pilgrims landed at Plymouth in 1620, and ten years later the Colony of Massachusetts was founded. A constant stream of immigration followed, spreading into the other New England states. Almost ceasing during the eighteen years of the English Civil War and the Commonwealth period—1642-1660—colonisation revived after the Restoration.

In these last years of the seventeenth century we can say that the settlements were thriving, but that back of them lay a wilderness. Roads were but trails, and in wet weather trails of mud. Our people were still largely concerned with the securing of a degree of permanence, safety, and household comfort, but, as we have seen, excellent furniture was already produced and competent workmen were continually coming from the home-land. So, though we still find the homely product of joiners, we also encounter William and Mary furniture worthy of its name and lineage.

Naturally, in date American furniture trailed the earliest English examples; for we must not only allow time for a certain style to become sufficiently established and popular enough for the likelihood of copying (and this necessity is too frequently lost sight of) but also a short period for it to be transferred and become popular here. This interval would considerably vary, according to conditions and closeness of intercourse. At some periods and in some places *some* American furniture of a new style might be made here shortly after its original appearance, but we must be rather careful not to date the general product—the "run"—of a particular style too early.

We must also remember that, as has been said, each mode would endure later than in England, for it

would not so soon be superseded by the succeeding type. We can only date according to known probabilities, for exceedingly little American furniture is "documented" and family traditions are so notoriously untrustworthy as often indeed to be ridiculous. We shall find wills, descriptions, and other surviving records a reliable aid, and, in later periods, advertisements.

Owing to the continued resistance of James, William and Mary were not really settled upon the throne till the Battle of the Boyne, July 1, 1690. We were not as yet avidly following the London fashions and we can scarcely count upon furniture of that style being made here before 1692 to 1695. The reign lasted but fourteen years, but the style endured here for a dozen or more years after William's death.

In reviewing the American furniture of this period we should realise that probably the larger proportion of it was of New England make. But, though Pennsylvania was so very new, it was settled by intelligent, well-to-do people, its climate was less severe than that of the north, and its progress was exceedingly rapid. Excellent workmen must have been among the first settlers or have followed soon after, for even in this period very fine furniture was made in Philadelphia and that city continued to be notable in this respect until the cessation of all good mobiliary art about 1825.

In Virginia and Carolina, owing to the profitable cultivation of tobacco and rice, life had already taken on its well-known picturesque aspect. At this period there was no manufacture in those colonies, and very little later. Furniture was imported from England, being charged against existing credits, and, to a lesser extent, brought, coastwise, from Philadelphia and other northern ports.

THE FURNITURE

CHAIRS

As we have seen in the Stuart chapter, the elaborate, high-backed chair of Charles II extended into the reign of James, but the cresting of the back was set *over* the supports instead of between them as formerly. This later fashion now persisted into the reign of William and Mary, there being a number of variations in details. Very soon, however, these chairs became simplified into the type illustrated in the example at the left in Plate 3. Except in the cresting, elaboration has now gone by the board, and upholstering or leather frequently take the place of caning. The Flemish scroll has disappeared, the front stretcher is simply turned with the Portuguese bulb at its centre, and the feet are "Spanish."

Later still, we find that the cresting has been reduced to the simple design seen in the central chair in Plate 3, that the back is spooned, and, what is of great importance, that the turned back-supports, or stiles, which had endured through so many years and through such a variety of changes, have now given way to a completely framed back. This framework is now moulded.

It is but seldom that we find in American chairs the flat, shaped or serpentine stretcher that plays so large a part in the William and Mary legged-furniture of England, but it is one of the notable features of the highboys and lowboys.

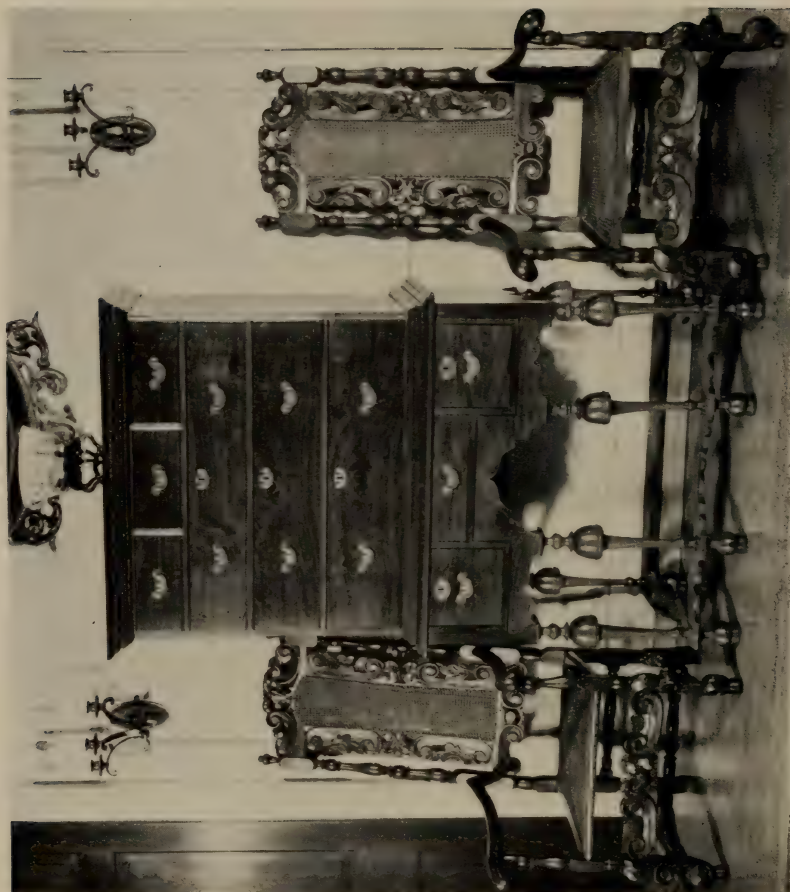
The Banister-backed chair was also prominent. It was an American development through certain natural suggestions of it that we see in some English chairs. The example illustrated in Plate 6 B preserves the baluster-turning of legs and arm-supports of the Stuart years but the feet and modified bulbs of the



CONCORD ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY. EAST FRONT CHAMBER

Early-Georgian Highboy and Bedstead, William and Mary chairs in centre, Hepplewhite chair on the right

PLATE 4



Photograph by Dillon

WILLIAM AND MARY HIGHBOY, Walnut front, Maple sides. C. 1710. CHARLES II CHAIRS
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.

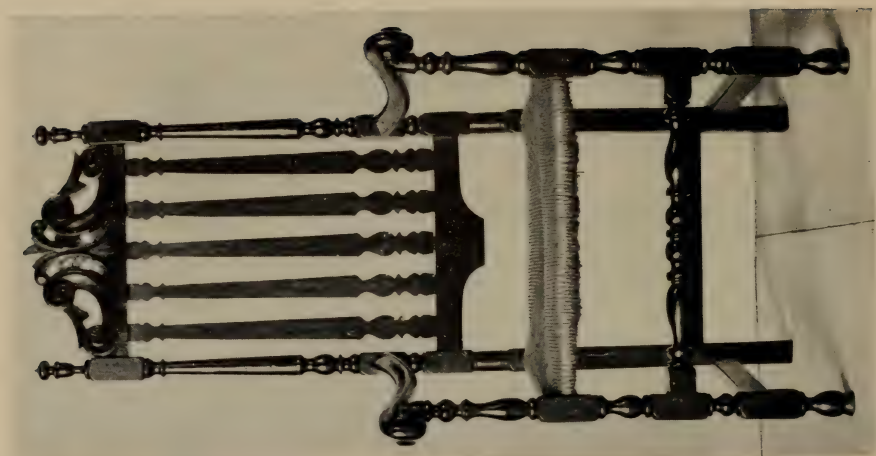


A. BURL WALNUT DESK, C. 1795
Metropolitan Museum



Photograph by Dillon
B. WALNUT DESK WITH THREE FRONT FEET, C. 1710
Howard Reinsnyder, Esq.

PLATE 6



B. BANISTER-BACK CHAIR
By Courtesy of Pennsylvania Museum



Photograph by Dillon
A. MAPLE WRITING- OR DRESSING-TABLE WITH SPANISH FEET, 1710-15. BIBLE-BOX OF 1737
By Courtesy of Howard Reikanyder, Esq.

stretcher place it with William and Mary furniture. Many of these chairs have the Spanish foot. As will readily be seen they are simplifications of the elaborate Stuart chair and almost all of them retain the cresting, though in some it is much modified.

A few day-beds with William and Mary characteristics have come down to us.

A slat-back chair with the large ball-foot appearing in so much William and Mary furniture, and with a very marked and comfortable "rake" in all its up-rights, is seen in Plate 13 A. Such pieces are excellent for simple interiors.

HIGHBOYS, LOWBOYS, AND TABLES

The fine highboy illustrated in Plate 4 is of the perfected type of the period. In the earliest examples the three arches of the base were (very exceptionally) absent or (usually) alike, leaving an equal space above them, occupied except in primitive pieces by one long drawer across the front. When the type was developed by raising and so differentiating the central arch, the arrangement of drawers appropriately became that of the illustration.

Following English precedent throughout, the top mouldings in this highboy—made in New England—are deeper than in earlier examples, where they are of the simplest description. Even in the severe mouldings we may be able to determine which in fact made its earliest appearance, but their *use* was decidedly irregular. Provided that the cabinet-maker could feel that he was adhering to what was appropriate to the type, he would be apt to choose what his fancy, or his resources, indicated at the time. The proportions of the piece would also have influence.

In English furniture we can often note the effect

of the two diverse influences of France and Holland; and that contest—all unconsciously to our workmen, probably—seems to have transferred itself to America as well: among highboys, for instance, there are those of the slenderness and elegance of Plate 4 and others with the heaviness and “squatness” characteristic of Dutch furniture.

The inception of each new feature in English furniture has accurately been dated by the authorities of that country. The late Percy Macquoid and Mr. Herbert Cezinsky, the greatest living authority on the subject, unite in giving 1690 as the earliest date of the appearance in England of the inverted-cup turned leg and the Portuguese bulb. The matter is perfectly simple—these features came in from Holland with William and his workmen. Such novelties were of course first made for the King and the nobility: how long would be required for these new fashions to reach our American workmen, be accepted by clients, and rendered into actual furniture? If we say that no highboys with cup-turning or the Portuguese bulb *could* have been made here before 1692 we shall certainly be within reason. Considering the tardiness with which the Queen Anne and Chippendale styles were taken up here under later and more favourable circumstances, about 1700 would probably be nearer the mark. Any earlier chests on stands that we may find referred to in inventories would have had the plain turned or the spiral leg of the Stuart reigns.

The only possible manner in which the cup and bulb could have had an earlier appearance here than 1692 would be through direct derivation from Holland, and as these highboys so closely followed the English style this seems unlikely.

In England the trumpet and the peg-top turned

legs and the square-pedestal leg came in at the same time—1690: here, the trumpet form seems to be rather later, while the other two appear not to have been made. All four forms were first developed in France under Louis XIII and his successor.

Still following the English development, to a number of the later highboys the torus frieze (a very broad rounded moulding) was added, as the front to an upper drawer. The torus had appeared in Italy as early as the building of the Farnese palace by Vignola, about 1570, where it was used above doorways, and it became very usual all through Europe during the Baroque seventeenth century.

A few cupboards with bases like the highboys also occurred. These had solid doors.

Lowboys were made to match the highboys and were used as dressing-tables. In the highboys the stretchers followed the form of the arches above them: in the lowboys they but occasionally did so and were usually serpentine, sometimes with a central finial.

The drawers of these pieces, and especially the finer examples, were frequently veneered in walnut or maple. A few highboys were japanned.

Small tables followed much the same lines as the lowboys.

The dressing-table illustrated in Plate 6 A is of the very end of the period, and in this will be noted the very important introduction of the cabriole leg, destined to prevail in furniture for the next fifty years. It is still in primitive form, heavy and remaining square as originally cut out, collared on the outward sides, and with Spanish foot. The apron in this dressing-table is of unusual design. This piece of furniture was purchased from the Estate of Harriet Randolph and as it had been in the possession of her grandmother,

hence probably belonged either to Captain Edward Fitz Randolph of General Anthony Wayne's Division or to Joseph Richardson, the silversmith, on the maternal side.

DESKS

Plate 5 illustrates two fine slant-top desks, the first closed and the second showing the interior. Both have the ball or "bun" feet, the latter being most unusual in its possession of three of them in front. The waved apron was more frequently seen in England in this period than here. In Fig. A the drawers are handsomely veneered in burl walnut.

Higher secretaries with drawers and pigeon-holes also appeared. Some had a falling-front on which to write, and others the slanting top.

BRASSES

The handles and key-plates of the period are well shown in the illustrations. The drop-handles appearing in Plate 5 A are the earlier. In the others the nails are fastened with bent wires. Sometimes the plates were plain, as in the dressing-table, and sometimes engraved as in Plate 5 B.

Naturally furniture of these earlier periods is scarce—it is surprising that there is as much of it as there is. If the reader were to look up such plans or illustrations as exist of our cities even as late as 1725, he would realise what comparatively small towns they were and how few would be the houses apt to contain furniture of the better grade. Twenty-five years later still, in 1750, the population of Philadelphia, then the largest "city" on the continent, was 12,500 souls!

THE QUEEN ANNE—EARLY GEORGIAN PERIOD

ENGLAND UNDER ANNE AND HER SUCCESSORS

ANNE was an Englishwoman and a Stuart—the second daughter of James II. Why, then, it may be asked, did the mobiliary modes of her reign continue to be Dutch?—thus of course affecting American as well as English furniture.

It has been said that it is not Kings and Courts that influence styles in furniture, but the cabinet-makers. In *degree* this very much depends. We can hardly ascribe the tremendous swing from the Puritanical, utilitarian styles of Cromwell to the efflorescent modes of Charles the Gay to cabinet-makers: on the other hand the virile genius of a Chippendale was able to impress his own fashions upon all Britain without the slightest consideration of His Majesty George the Second. There exists another situation—that where the craftsmen are let alone and among them there is no disturbing genius. In that case they pursue their own generally even way.

And so it was during the reign of Queen Anne. By now the Dutch tradition had stamped itself upon the life of the court, upon manners, upon architecture, and furniture; and, though the modes were changed, the new was even more Dutch than the old! The craftsmen were undisturbed, for Anne was not a woman of marked intelligence. She has been described as of “colourless personality” and her court as “rather dowdy.” As, after William had landed in 1688, she wished him success against her own father, James, it is easy to divine where lay her sympathies. There were always

foreign wars, but the new idea by which the sovereign put himself in harmony with parliament by choosing his ministry from the majority in the house had been discovered "almost by accident" and brought political peace within the nation itself. She herself disturbed it by her intrigues to secure the succession to the "Pretender," her half-brother, but this was at the very end of her life and her machinations failed. She reigned but twelve years—from 1702 to 1714.

Heavy, ornate furniture was made for the nobility, but the tremendous expense of the incessant foreign wars of William and of Anne sat heavily upon the resources of the people and the more typical furniture of Anne's reign was very simple: on the other hand, the comparatively well-to-do trading class was rapidly increasing, supplying abundant work for the chair- and cabinet-makers—the two trades were then distinct.

The remnants of feudalism, the autocratic rule of kings, and romanticism had gone by the board, and from now onwards we find a colder, more matter-of-fact, more modern, and materialistic spirit, very appreciative of success and creature comforts. The literature of eighteenth century England gives us the key: able as it was, it was a very different literature from that of Shakespeare and Marlowe, Milton and Donne.

It was at just about this period that all through Europe dawned the desire for real physical ease and convenience, and that dug, early in the eighteenth century, that "Deep Dividing Line" between all furniture and decoration preceding it and that which followed that I have described and emphasised in my book on "Learning Decoration and Furniture." This change was gradual and transitional, but sweepingly effective. The differences between the furniture of William and Mary and their successor are perhaps not

so radical as those between the styles of Louis XIV and Louis XV but they are notable and will presently be seen.

The period we are now considering extended far beyond the reign of Anne, for no new, virile style arose to take the place of the current mode till the advent of Chippendale in 1748. The intervening time may be characterised as years of drift. The first George was a Hanoverian who could not speak English, and his influence upon the world of furniture and decoration was non-existent. His successor was of stronger personality, but troubled himself about none of these things. There were developments of a sort: the most notable of these being, perhaps, the "architect's furniture" of 1720-50. The heavy, ostentatious, gilded furniture of the then well-nigh tasteless aristocracy was, fortunately, not introduced into America and need not be dwelt upon here. The lion mahogany furniture was likewise absent.

Almost immediately upon the accession of Anne in 1702 came the mentioned development in the direction of comfort that had been foreshadowed in the very last days of William—his consort, Mary, had died of smallpox in 1694. Tall, stiff backs gave way to those of moderate height, spooned to fit the spinal column of humanity: the straight leg was abandoned in favour of the universal cabriole.

Queen Anne furniture was, it is true, less formal, less elegant than that of William and Mary, but it not only was, it *looked* more comfortable—and more Dutch.

With us, across the Atlantic, this lead was of course followed, but at an interval of a dozen years or more. All experts with whom I have talked unite in feeling

that nearly all American furniture is usually dated too early.

And this brings us to the American scene of the eighteenth century.

THE COLONIES FIND THEMSELVES

1700-1776

The story of colonisation in America may be summed up in one word—energy. While such must be the story in every like enterprise, there seemed to have been something well-nigh superhuman in the American case. While, as we have seen, at the first date appearing above the colonists had but secured a firm foothold, at the latter a nation had been made and was ready to be born.

Climate undoubtedly had its part—that American air and sudden changes are exciting, or at least stimulating, is evidenced by the whole character of our people.

But did not the *opportunity* presented have still greater effect? Save for the few, those who came to our shores had, in one direction or another, been among the “held down.” Freedom, both to succeed and to carry out one’s own ideas, seemed at last at hand. Naturally some prospered better than others, so that an aristocracy of success developed in every colony—for in essentials humanity does not change—“*plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.*” But, given ability and “luck,” there was here nothing, at least, to forbid any man taking his rightful place.

The suppressed religionist—and how many of them were that—was now to find a home where he could worship the God of his conception in his own manner. A very cruel God they imagined often, who damned without stint for honest relaxations or harmless pec-

cadillos; but so they conceived Him. And so they worshipped Him, and having themselves found freedom, straightway proceeded to put the yoke of persecution, or ostracism, upon the neck of every other man who did not hold their conception. I need not instance cases—they are too well known. And the Anglican church established itself by law wherever an opportunity was given it to do so and did not prove itself much more tolerant than at home. Indeed, toleration was not esteemed a virtue in those days and was scarcely practiced elsewhere than in Maryland and Pennsylvania. The rule was to “contend for the faith”—as each of the disputing bodies saw it for themselves—and they contended mightily. We cannot deny that they were earnest.

A grinding fight for life itself was the lot of the first settlers, particularly in New England’s stern climate and rock-strewn soil. And they were poor, those early Pilgrims—small tradesmen, petty farmers, and workmen. Though in their hardness they pitied not themselves or others, our hearts go out to them. But soon, through unceasing energy in this new land, they knew more of comfort than they had ever known before.

The Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony were in better case and were well supplied with goods. Difficulties were there too, but they succeeded against heavy odds in wresting a living and often wealth from soil or sea.

In the various colonies, adventurers, redemptioners, solid men, all had their chance. Strife for Profit and Power—the two great well-springs of human action—functioned royally. The seaboard settlements became small cities, with many comforts and teeming life; the

wilderness was honeycombed as far as Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

And these pioneers were their own masters: what wonder that independence grew in the spirit of America? For a new land, production became enormous, not only in agriculture, including rice and tobacco, but in livestock, furs, lumber and the like. Household art and manufactures flourished; iron was mined. As a people we were self-supporting and prosperous, bringing from abroad only luxuries and foreign products, such as tea, coffee, fine textiles, china and porcelain, fashionable attire, pictures, and European books. And for these we had abundance to ship in return.

Not only the land but the sea gave us wealth. The fishing, whaling, and trading industries grew to large proportions. We built ships and sailed them till England itself grew mutinous at our competition. In times of war between England and other powers, privateering against the enemy was profitable indeed, and much loot, including the finest silks and wines, found its way into our seaboard homes. In times of peace we carried on a huge trade with the West Indies, Europe, and the East. And—as bunkum finds short shrift in this brief chronicle—be it said that smuggling, slave-trading, privateering, or evasions of the law founded the wealth of many an American family.

If Energy was the keynote of our success, the word Jealousy rather well covers the cause of the growing tension between the homeland and ourselves. On the English side it is of course too embrasive an expression; for the American colonies then occupied a very small portion of the attention of the British nation as a whole: but time and again the enterprise of those colonies proved a thorn in the flesh of British merchants

and shippers, and those interests made themselves very distinctly heard in government circles.

Of the new America there were, naturally, two conceptions. One of them was this: England had founded, nurtured, and protected the colonies, and they were hers. The founding had been at the sacrifice of life and treasure; it had been done through much enterprise. The recompense to Spain of her conquests in the new continent had been millions in gold. In our success we should, as colonies, be a paying investment, and, to put it succinctly, England "needed the money." Furthermore and finally, as colonies, we should be well under control. Instead of such a result, we were in many ways becoming *competitors*, and we were distinctly restive and rebellious under kindly guidance. So, on the one hand.

On the other, we had through superhuman effort wrought out our own salvation from starvation, disease, and massacre by the Red Man. If England had protected us from France and Spain, so had our men, as soldiers, fought side by side with Englishmen in foreign wars. Our success was deserved, and we purposed to reap its benefits. We were Englishmen, yet we had no voice in the affairs of England; and, what was much more to the point, regulations and taxes, just or unjust, might be placed upon ourselves without let or hindrance, because of our lack of representation in the British parliament.

Most of the royal governors placed over the provinces were here for their enrichment and that of their satellites: many were autocratic and overbearing, cared little for the welfare of the people, and exploited the province for the benefit of Great Britain. But—the Colonial Assemblies held the *purse* for the payment of

government, and they used their power. When the first Continental Congress met, the end was at hand.

Material prosperity and social eminence are not all of life, and the long list of men justly to be called great who sprang from American soil and were foremost in its affairs upon the eve of revolution attests the intellectual cultivation we had reached. Some of us, because of the wrong-headedness of his earlier eulogists, formerly rather disliked Washington as an able prig: now that we know the man, he looms as very human and probably greatest of them all. Another, born in New England, and emigrating to Pennsylvania, seems especially typical of America—Benjamin Franklin. Most good enterprises, from fire-insurance to philosophical societies, had their beginnings in Philadelphia, and in most of these that genial, humourous man, of comfortable figure but tireless energy, was foremost. Of lowly origin and in his success pursuing his own ways, he was not greatly in favour among the aristocrats; and, doubtless to his own gratified amusement, was idolised by the politest court in Christendom—that of France.

Our progress in the arts was, for a new nation, very satisfactory: in architecture, furniture, and decoration in the Chippendale period, after 1760, it was phenomenal. But that is not yet: we shall now see the furniture of the Queen Anne—Early Georgian type.

THE AMERICAN FURNITURE OF THE PERIOD

There are two facts to be recognised in connexion with this furniture:

I. It began late and ended late. Anne took the English throne in 1702 and was dead by 1714. The style continued under the early Georges, but it is

doubtful if there was much Queen Anne furniture in America before her death—perhaps we had a few chairs of that style before that date.

It was also slow in development. There were always survivals in England, but features from the preceding period were particularly persistent here. We do not now know whether the state of mind evidenced by our furniture was conservatism or dislike. As regards the cabriole leg it would appear to have been the latter, for even when the bow-back was adopted in chairs the William and Mary turned leg with Spanish foot often held its own against the newcomer (Plate 7 A) and the Spanish foot frequently clung to the cabriole leg.

In England this leg appeared in fine proportion very quickly after Anne's accession. The knees were at first plain, but soon became ornamented with the shell and, much more rarely, the acanthus-leaf. This lead was followed here, but more slowly.

II. Some of these pieces—and especially chairs—look so absolutely Dutch that sometimes we might suspect a direct Hollandish origin: but it is doubtful if we ever need go further than England for the precedent of any American piece of this period. English authorities are perfectly frank as to the origin of the style, and it is a simple fact that in furniture London was as Dutch as Amsterdam. The eastern counties of England, whence came many to the Massachusetts Bay settlements of Boston and Salem, must have been especially permeated with this feeling through small shipping plying to and fro between themselves and their neighbours of the Zuider Zee.

CHAIRS

We might suspect direct Dutch influence in the chair in Plate 7 B but I have before me the illustration of

an English chair with the same primitive-looking base except that in the American example the stretchers are set rather lower.

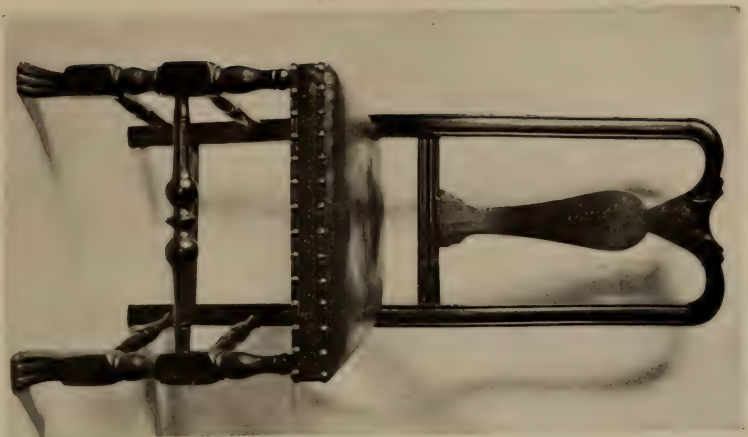
It is in seating-furniture that, in all ages, changes are first made.

In the two earlier periods the backrest was connected with a piece crossing between the back supports (as in Plate 7 A) but quickly gave way to a sounder construction—especially better for these back-splats composed of one piece of rather springy nature. The splat therefore now joins the seat-rail as in figure B of the same plate. Though these splats considerably varied, almost all bear a sufficient resemblance in form to the objects that gave them their names—the vase or fiddle-back, they are called. In some late examples the splats are pierced, this being the beginning of the style of back taken over by Chippendale and with which we are so familiar.

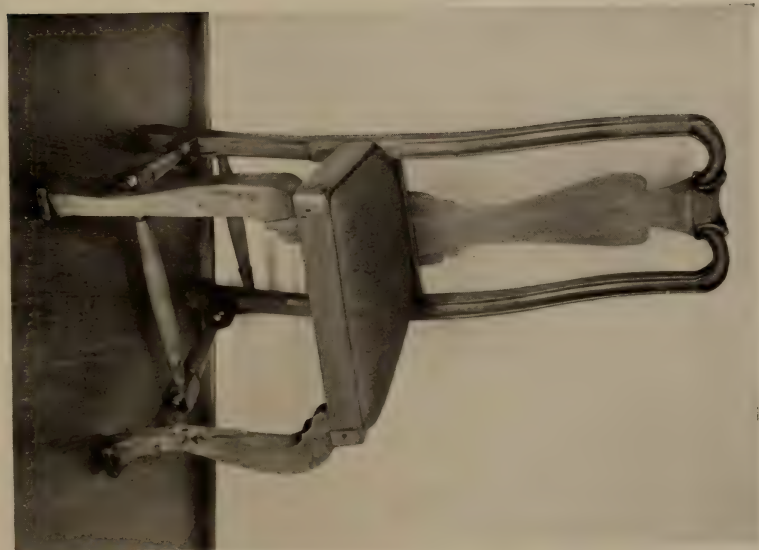
The chair shown in Plate 7 A is exclusively American—and it is amusing. The cabriole leg was at least 12 years earlier than the bow back, yet a large number of New England chairs were made with the bow back while the legs that belong to it were “shunted” and the old legs with Spanish feet used in their place. Half the newer style was adopted and the other half avoided—and that the *wrong* half. These chairs were made nowhere else.

In the last chair of William and Mary it was noted that the back-supports were not turned but moulded; and this treatment persists. Observe the slight ornament at the top of the back in these two chairs and behold what is left of the lofty cresting of Charles II and his successor!

So far, the seats remain straight in front. In the base of the transition chair all the features of the



A. NEW ENGLAND TRANSITION CHAIR, C. 1710
By Courtesy Mary H. Northend



Photograph by Dillon
B. EARLY QUEEN ANNE MAPLE CHAIR, C. 1715
By Courtesy Howard Reinsnyder, Esq.

PLATE 8



A. WALNUT TABLE WITH EXTENDED TOP, 1740-50



B. WALNUT SIDE CHAIRS OF THE FINEST TYPE, 1725-40

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.
Photographs by Dillon



A. LOUIS XV FAUTEUIL. FRANCE

By Courtesy of Kate Villiers Clive and *The Connoisseur*, London



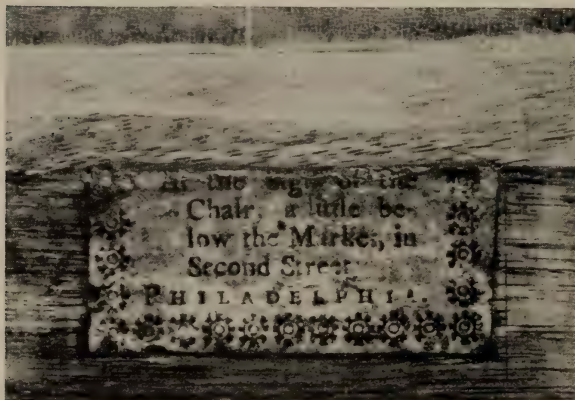
B. QUEEN ANNE WALNUT ARM CHAIR, C. 1725

By Courtesy of Abbot McClure, Esq.

The likenesses and differences between the French and the Anglo-Dutch styles will be seen by a comparison of these two fine examples



A. LABELLED WALNUT ARM CHAIR BY WILLIAM SAVERY
PHILADELPHIA



B. THE LABEL ON ABOVE CHAIR. SEE TEXT
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.
Photographs by Whitenack



A. GEORGIAN WING-CHAIR
Eagle-Head Knees
By Courtesy Metropolitan Museum



B. QUEEN ANNE TRANSITION TO CHIPPENDALE, C. 1760
Loaned to the Pennsylvania Museum
by Mrs. James S. Merritt, Abington, Pa.

PLATE 12



A. FLAT TOP MAPLE HIGHBOY, 1725-35

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.

Photographs by Dillon



B. CHEST-OF-DRAWERS WITH BRACKET FEET 1737

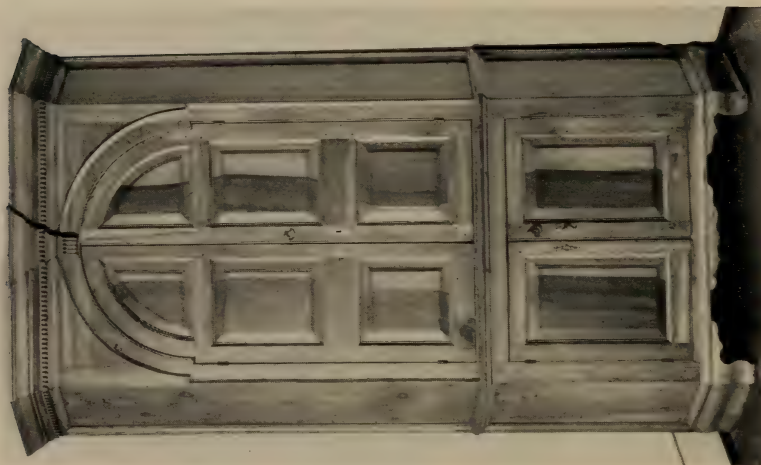


A. WILLIAM & MARY CHAIR. QUEEN ANNE DROP-LEAF TABLE
By Courtesy Howard Donaldson Eberlein, Esq.



Photograph by Dillon

B. MAPLE TWO-PIECE DESK, 1725-30
By Courtesy Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



A. CORNER CUPBOARD IN PINE



B. CORNER CHINA-CLOSET IN POPLAR

Fine examples of Georgian "Architect's Furniture".

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsyder, Esq.

Photographs by Dillon

previous period continue—including our old acquaintances the Portuguese bulb and the Spanish foot. In figure B, previously referred to, the stretchers remain—though they, too, soon are abandoned—but we have the real cabriole leg. It is still square, rather clumsy, and has a squared club foot, but it is cabriole.

The rounded club foot (see Plate 9 B) came in with Anne and is one of the features of the style, but was by no means universal. The claw-and-ball had first appeared in England, very infrequently, just before the close of the preceding century, and that and the web foot (Plate 8 A) are now also common in legged furniture. Some pointed club feet occur.

By about 1720 or 1725 it is noted by makers that stretchers are neither necessary nor advisable in the new type, and these follow other discarded elements: the process may even be seen in Plate 9 B which retains but a solitary back-brace.

The particular—and peculiar—form of arm-support in all three arm chairs illustrated here is not without precedent in England. The entirely unbroken head-rest in Plate 9 B is unusual. Seat-rails now became rounded or shaped.

About 1725 the straight stiles of the early examples are broken by a “hitch” or sharp inward curve a little above the seat-rail. This is seen in Plates 8 B, 9 B, and 10 A, and it is generally retained until the transition into the Chippendale type, Plate 11 B.

The pair of side chairs in Plate 8 B (there are three of them in the hands of the present owner) illustrate the most ornamental type of the period as appearing in America. The shaping of the seat-rails, the fine carving, the excellent use of the Queen Anne shell and the acanthus leaf upon the knees are all clearly seen in the illustration. The latter feature is infrequent in

American work of this period and not very general in early Queen Anne chairs in England, but it was one of the features giving name to the "cabochon-and-leaf" type taken over and developed—as we shall see—by the Chippendale school.

The covering of the chair to the right in Plate 8 B was worked by members of the well-known Burd family of Philadelphia and was taken from a piece of furniture from their equally famous house, now long since demolished. The chairs themselves came from another old family in the same city.

The arm chair in Plate 10 is a labelled piece by the now celebrated William Savery of Philadelphia, who did *not* make all the Chippendale highboys attributed to him a few years ago but assuredly did make one, which bears his labels (Plate 43). As will be seen by the chair illustration, the upper portion of its label is missing, owing to a repair-piece (also clearly discernible) having been set in the back of the chair at some former period of its existence. As several labelled Savery pieces have now been discovered, the label is immediately recognizable. This chair exhibits the fine quality of Philadelphia workmanship.

It should be borne in mind that this Queen Anne-Early Georgian style must not be considered as Rococo—the Rococo style consists of much more than the cabriole leg. We shall see an abundance of it in the next chapter, but the Queen Anne style is an extension of the Baroque movement.

The last chair appearing here, Plate 11 B, preserves many of the features of the Queen Anne Period, but in its reversion to the straight seat-rail and back-uprights, and particularly in the development of the "cupid's-bow" top-rail, it has taken on characteristics

of the coming Chippendale type. The reason for adding the word "type" to Chippendale's name will be abundantly evident when we reach the next chapter. This chair was part of the wedding furniture of Ann Edwards who married Joseph Russell in 1760 and this date coincides with the introduction of the Chippendale style into America.

In the fine Georgian wing-chair in the Metropolitan Museum (Plate 11 A) the eagle's-head knee, frequent in those years in England, will be noted. The wing or easy chair was a favourite of the period, the bases having the various types of legs and feet that we have already seen.

It was very late in this period or early in the next that the Windsor chair made its appearance. It is found in infinite variety, and is appropriate to the porch, the kitchen, and the interior of the genuine farm-house. Its use in connexion with the better grade of furniture is a decorative error. And the modern making of it in mahogany is a like anomaly. A chair in every way better adapted to general furnishing will be suggested in the next chapter.

More suitable to general simple furnishing than the Windsors were the plain side and arm chairs with rush seats, fiddle-back, and turned members. Some of them had almost straight legs with club-feet; others were entirely straight, being turned to the bottom of the legs.

Roundabout chairs were made, with either turned or cabriole legs.

SOFAS

The sofas current in these years naturally followed the chairs in their characteristics. The type is exemplified by a fine sofa now in the Metropolitan Museum,

originally purchased by Governor James Logan from a Philadelphia cabinet-maker for his celebrated mansion Stenton in Germantown. It is of walnut, with shell knee, web feet, wing arms, and high entirely upholstered back with waved outline. The covering is of eighteenth century red velvet. Straight topped upholstered backs were also made.

Small sofas in this and other periods were called love-seats.

TABLES

The writing-table with its noticeably long, underbraced top, illustrated in Plate 8 A, is the survival of a type found in the Stuart period, with the new leg substituted for the straight, turned, and braced legs then in vogue.

Drop-leaf and dining-tables, all of course with the cabriole leg, were common in this period. I think the example of the former shown in Plate 13 A might be said to be *well-shod*. It is certainly "of a Dutchness," and attractive in its very quaintness.

Tea-tables now became very frequent—marking an advance in social life. They were both circular and rectangular and were appropriately slender in build, usually having waved aprons of the types shown in the highboy and desk—Plates 12 A and 13 B.

DESKS

These continued in both the two-piece (Plate 13 B) and one-piece types of the previous period, but with the developed cabriole leg. As the one-piece type was the simpler and more elegant, it became the more frequent as the period progressed and finally survived the other construction.

Very rarely we encounter a secretary-bookcase of

this period. They are of the same type as the desks with a cabinet top added.

HIGHBOYS AND LOWBOYS, CHESTS-OF-DRAWERS, AND CUPBOARDS

The viewing of human nature must indeed be sport for the gods. We find that a certain condition is not quite ideal and instead of simply remedying it and being done with it, we must needs fly to the other extreme. It was discovered that bending to the lower drawer of a chest-of-drawers was a bit inconvenient, and so the piece was raised on legs: not satisfied with this it must then burgeon out at the *top* till it reached the towering altitude of the highboy in Plate 12 A. Perhaps the English were less fond of climbing than we, or perhaps step-ladders were fewer: in any event the highboy there dropped back into a chest-of-drawers—and they were precisely where they were before! Americans continued to climb till near the end of the next period, but in viewing the Chippendale highboys all else is forgotten in our admiration of their beauty.

But in art no one thing stands without relation to other things. In considering the height of furniture there is a point we should not forget—that if *all* furniture were low it would indeed be difficult satisfactorily to furnish a room. Instead of the agreeable variety conferred by pieces high and low, we should have a rather low line about the four walls with large unbroken spaces above, and if the ceiling were lofty this would be intolerable. Better far that the upper portions of highboys, double-chests, secretary-book-cases and cupboards should go unoccupied than that we should be reduced to such a uniformity. Hangings, pictures, and the like prove a present aid in the filling

of blank spaces, but such resources have their limit of employment.

A few chests-of-drawers were made here in Georgian years, and in Plate 12 B we have a thoroughly sensible piece of furniture. It contains five graduated drawers (the upper being divided into three) and all are convenient of access. Its bracket feet raise it sufficiently from the floor, yet the total height is not too great. These bracket feet were common in England, but infrequent here before the Chippendale years except in architect's furniture.

This chest-of-drawers and the Bible-box on the dressing-table in Plate 6 A were wedding-furniture of Sarah Smedley in 1737. They descended to a Sarah in each of several generations before their purchase by the present owner. It will be noted that though the present handles of the chest are of early style it was originally furnished with knobs.

The highboy illustrated in Plate 12 A is of the middle period. The earliest examples were of the same general form but without the sunburst ornament. Pendants persisted from the William and Mary period. The present piece is unusual in having a different decoration on the upper central drawer; for the sunburst was generally repeated. The small knee-caps are of metal and the workmanship is excellent.

About 1725 the scroll or bonnet-top appeared as a result of the architectural influence dominating English wall-furniture from approximately 1720 to 1750. Whether architects designed furniture made by cabinet-makers, or whether the craftsmen adopted architectural features is not known, but architecture became rampant in the product of the time. The scroll-top was copied from door-heads, and the pilaster was widely employed.

Both these features are seen in the highboy appear-

ing in Plate 3. Though of the later, more elaborate type it will be noted that the pendants to the apron still persist. The making of flat-top highboys did not cease with the introduction of the scroll-top but persisted through the period.

Lowboys or dressing-tables matched the highboys they were to accompany and so had aprons of various designs, frequently, too, preserving the pendants.

The corner-closets shown in Plate 14 are architectural throughout. In figure B we again see the scroll-top with finials and a modification of the pilaster.

BEDSTEADS

An excellent bedstead of the Georgian years, with cabriole leg and plain knee, appears in the Concord interior, Plate 3, and another in Plate 46.

Earlier in the century they were quite plain, as they were to be covered by drapery. The posts were usually rather thin and spike-like, but the lower ones were sometimes fluted or shaped. The headboards were low and very simple. The feet were occasionally blocked.

Later than this—probably 1760—were the handsome bedsteads such as that illustrated in Plate 45, with boldly and carefully executed acanthus-carved knees. A central volute extends upward over the base of the post. As draperies were still in vogue, the upper posts and headboard remain plain. This type of leg would commonly be termed "Chippendale," but it was frequent in England before that master-craftsman entered business and so should properly be termed of pre-Chippendale style.

THE WOODS EMPLOYED

About 1710—ten years earlier than in England—mahogany came into use: but the native pine, maple,

walnut, cherry, and occasionally other fruit-woods, were general. With such simple furniture as that composing almost all of that of this period in America, the native woods were entirely appropriate. In the next period both mahogany and ornament came into their own.

HANDLES

As appropriate to the furniture, the handles were of simple types—of unobtrusive willow-pattern, plain bails, and, occasionally, knobs. Drop-ring handles appear on the cupboard in Plate 14 A. Figure B has the H hinges so familiar in architectural work.

THE CHIPPENDALE STYLE

IT IS with the Chippendale style that we reach the first of the really great periods in English, and consequently in American, cabinet-making. Desirable in many respects as the earlier modes may have been, we now for the first time find furniture comparable to the best Continental work, that of the fine French and Italian periods "of almost superhuman beauty."

The phraseology above used should be noted: we cannot accurately say with Chippendale, but are compelled to use the words "with the Chippendale style." For from now on the story of the styles is particularly full of difficulties and uncertainties and we can only characterise the mobiliary product of the last half of the eighteenth century as belonging to the Chippendale, Hepplewhite, or Sheraton *styles* or *schools*. Writers may and do continually and conversationally say that Chippendale, or another, did certain things, but it must unfailingly be understood that it is only sometimes that we can with certainty refer designs or work to individuals or firms.

Many reasons for this will make themselves evident as we proceed but it may at once be said that this is largely because detailed information is so exceedingly meagre—we do not even yet know, for example, when George Hepplewhite went into business. In the present age of weighty biographies of numerous illustrious nonentities this may now seem strange, but no one then saw fit to chronicle the lives and achievements of even the greatest in English furniture design. Chippendale was the first in that country to lift cabinet-making from the level of mere tradesmanship to the rank of

high craftsmanship, but this is in our eyes rather than in those of his contemporaries. True, he was the fashionable cabinet-maker of London and actually dominated its furniture styles for well-nigh fifteen years, but the spirit of the times had not yet risen to the appreciation of such art and the importance of recording the details of his life and work. *Then* he was still but a tradesman!

Furthermore, movements in art, as in invention, are always "in the air." None of these men, Chippendale, or Shearer, Hepplewhite or Sheraton, stood alone: there were also others, endowed with less genius but often with much ability, who at the same time were producing excellent results; sometimes because they were working in the same direction and under the same decorative impulse, sometimes as followers of these principal exponents of the various modes. For all of these men issued books of design, and it was open to any cabinet-maker in Leeds, Liverpool, or York, or in Salem, New York, or Philadelphia to produce furniture either exactly or approximately following the designs illustrated.

We should naturally conclude that these volumes would be an embodiment of the respective styles, but we shall presently see, and but too clearly for our comfort, how far this is from being the case. Had the custom of signing and dating even only important pieces prevailed, as it did to a large extent in France, the student of furniture would have been spared a world of investigation and conjecture.

THE STYLE IN ENGLAND

In order to have any understanding of Chippendale furniture in America we must, naturally, know something of it in the country of its origin.

The long-current traditions regarding Chippendale himself, which led to so many errors regarding the early style, have at last been relegated to the limbo of fable by positive public records.*

Thomas Chippendale was baptised at Otley, Yorkshire, on June 5, 1718. As baptisms in the Church of England are not delayed, he was probably born the same year. His father was a joiner of that town by the name of John, and not also Thomas as was formerly believed. Mr. Oliver Brackett, of the Victoria and Albert Museum, who has gathered together various particulars, says that it is reported by John Chippendale of Newcastle-on-Tyne that Chippendale attracted by his unusual ability the notice of the ancestors of the Earl of Harewood through whose assistance he was enabled to start in business in London, and remarks that this was probably in placing him in some well-known cabinet-shop there. I may add that Harewood House was one of the large establishments for which, from 1771-75 Chippendale executed important furniture in his alliance with Robert Adam.

On May 19, 1748 he married Catherine Redshaw and the same year finds him in business for himself—Mr. Cezinsky tells me that this is the first year in which his name appears in the London Directory. He was then thirty years of age and was alone—his father did not establish the business, as was formerly believed, nor was he ever connected with it.

In 1755 Thomas Chippendale was occupying three houses in St. Martin's Lane, where a fire broke out destroying the chests of twenty-two workmen. In 1754 he had published the first edition of "The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director" and was now

* See foot of page 95.

prosperous, working for the nobility and gentry, and his fame was established.

Simply by the aid of these dates we are now able to clear up previous misapprehensions.

The piece of furniture with which even those who know practically nothing of the subject are familiar is the "Chippendale" chair—and it was developed in London between 1735 and 1740, that is to say eight years at least before Chippendale began business in 1748.

Between 1735 and 1740 in England began the revolt from those long years of dominance of the Dutch influence in favour of that of France. This was first seen simply in the refinement of form and in the evolving of certain details from the earlier Queen Anne-Early Georgian mode. Referring to the American chairs, showing this development, in Plate 15 A and B, we shall see that the hooped top-rail has now given way to the cupid's bow; that the back-splat, while retaining the vase shape, is now composed of interlaced strap-work. These two features are particularly characteristic of what is commonly called the Chippendale chair. Now that dates tell us that they could not have originated with him, but with unknown predecessors, the question arises as to whether we shall continue the nomenclature. With due recognition of facts there is no reason why we should not do so. Not only is it more convenient, but it is to be remembered that he adopted the mode and continued it during the whole course of his career: it was he who, in colloquial phrase, put this type of chair "on the map."

Personally I do not feel at all sure that some of the finest characteristics of "pre-Chippendale" furniture do not actually belong to him. Disregarding

the possibility of our some day learning that he entered business at a somewhat earlier date, we do not know what he may have produced while working for others—many men do unusual work for which the firm employing them naturally and rightly receives the credit. Certainly no one gains the phenomenal ability of a Chippendale only on the eve of entering business upon his own account, and it must be remembered that within six or seven years thereafter he had become the most famous cabinet-maker in the kingdom. Such ability must have made itself manifest *somewhere* by the time he was about twenty-four years of age, that is to say about 1742. Let us therefore work backward for a moment and see what we discern. It is in certain chairs of just about that date that we find a greater elaboration of beautiful carving and a sense of style, of distinction, dominating the whole piece. It was then that the French dolphin-foot and the French *quatre-foil* lattice (seen in Plate 15 C) appeared, and we know his tendencies, throughout his career, in favour of the mobiliary forms of France. And although acanthus-carving of the knee had sporadically occurred long before, after 1745 it becomes the usual ornament. Were these features due to Thomas Chippendale? It is an amiable theory: we do not know.

THE "DIRECTOR"

Chippendale's "Director" was first published in 1754, with a Preface dated 23d March of that year. A second edition with no change beyond the resetting of the title-page appeared in 1759; a third, with numerous additions and some omissions was published in 1762, this last edition being first issued in parts.

The plates of even the first edition were somewhat worn, indicating the probability of separate impressions

having been pulled from them for use with patrons and in the workroom. As in the Preface to this first edition he refers to certain animadversions made against his designs, they must have been accessible to criticism before publication in book-form.

Naturally, this volume is the best guide that we possess to the various Chippendale phases and without it we would be lost indeed, but it is an exceedingly uncertain guide. To express it concisely, the "Director" was a glorified trade-catalogue showing the furniture that Chippendale was ready to make and hoped to make for patrons that he already had and that he hoped to get. It should not injure him in American estimation to know that he was decidedly efficient and a "go-getter."

He does not show a ball-and-claw foot in the whole volume: the styles illustrated were *new* styles. Possibly he may have made pieces from some of the designs anterior to their issue in book-form, but they must have been few, for many designs need rationalising, and this was done in the actual construction of furniture of corresponding design. The volume was experimental and if we "check up" existing English Chippendale furniture by this book we shall find that some pieces closely resemble illustrations there shown, that others do not, and that many designs there appearing were not made up at all.

The "Director" illustrated Chippendale's Gothic and Chinese styles, re-introduced the straight leg, and was a very blast of the Rococo. As we shall see, the latter is of special importance to us because of its extensive employment by the foremost makers in America.

Our knowledge will be advanced by considering certain misapprehensions regarding Chippendale's

Rococo furniture. The first is that it came late in his career, whereas it is a foremost characteristic of the very first edition of the "Director," published but six years after he began business. The second is the derogatory or apologetic attitude too often taken toward that ornamental phase of his work.

This furniture was made for palatial establishments and was extremely costly even in the days of its production: it was not intended for the average abode. If Americans in general were more familiar with the whole field of European furniture throughout the centuries of its design* they would be more appreciative of the wonderful work accomplished by the human brain and hand. Chippendale's ribband-back chairs and French commodes are among the most glorious productions of the cabinet-making art. They are wonders of design and marvels of carving: Gibbon's work was in soft lime wood: Chippendale's in hard and tough mahogany. See Plates 29 B and 38. He was by no means alone in presenting Rococo design, but he was the only one we know who *used* the style as if he had been born to it.

At first sight it is also puzzling to note what is so well expressed in the phrase "how non-Chippendalian some signed Chippendale pieces can be." (The word should be documented, as Chippendale did not sign his work.) This is the furniture produced when, in alliance with Robert Adam, Chippendale worked from 1766 onward at Nostell Priory, Harewood House, and other "great" houses. Though constructed by and billed by Thomas Chippendale and (beginning with 1771) Chippendale, Haig & Co., it was made after designs by Adam and therefore cannot properly be con-

* See "The Practical Book of Learning Decoration and Furniture" with 180 illustrations.

sidered Chippendale furniture. It enhances our appreciation of his ability to realise that he could with the greatest facility and success so depart from his own *metier* and follow the classical mode of Adam, then and in the Garrick furniture. But Chippendale was always at heart a Romanticist and never a Classicist: although finally that Classicism triumphed and fashion steadily moved away from his own prepossessions, Chippendale proved himself unregenerate and would not yield in the pursuit of his own ideals. The style of his very last days (he died in 1779) was his "French manner," using the typical scroll foot of Louis XV for his chairs and building commodes with metal mounts in the style of the *ébénistes* of that reign.

Chippendale did his very finest work between the years 1750 and 1760 when he was constructing furniture principally for the nobility and gentry. A newer aristocracy of wealth had also grown up, emulating the older class as closely as might be in manner of living, and Chippendale found among these many customers. Either he or his followers also made much simple but excellent furniture for the householder of moderate means. He never ceased the production of fine pieces, but as his business grew he undoubtedly did more commercial work, and, later, when he was losing his more important connexion he would have been obliged to depend to a greater degree upon the less notable clientèle and his work with Adam.

It is doubtful however if a defection occurred quite so soon or was quite as serious as is sometimes thought. Let us fall back upon reliable dates. Robert Adam returned from his studies on the Continent in 1757 and had opened his architect's office by February 1758. His series of drawings for furniture and mantels, at Soane, were from about 1762 to 1790, the early ones

being very tentative. As Adam found that no existing English furniture would properly accompany his Classic interiors, he began to design it for himself. He was in no sense a cabinet-maker and these designs often required rationalising for actual production. Accounts rendered prove that some of the furniture was made by Chippendale: the mutual influence between Adam and Hepplewhite, evident in furniture itself, shows that at a later time (not before 1775) some was made by Hepplewhite: while others, too, were doubtless employed. Adam's work was not generally available, for he designed for his own clientèle; but we know that gradually he was imitated by the lesser craftsmen of his time. His influence was preëminently upon architecture, and it is doubtful if before 1765 enough furniture had actually been constructed to emphasise the change in this branch and materially to affect Chippendale. By that date his dominance and prestige might have weakened in the estimation of those alert to changes of impulse in the world of art, but with general society his vogue was firmly welded and it is questionable how much his reputation or his business suffered for several years still to come.

But after about 1770 "the Adam character permeated the whole trade." Nevertheless during Chippendale's last years he was still making handsome furniture—especially that in the "French manner" previously referred to.

In addition to the wonderful late commodes with metal mounts Mr. Ceszinsky illustrates among others a superb chair of 1770-75 with elaborate dolphin feet, in which the entire woodwork is covered with an appropriate pattern of scales. He tells us that this was originally one of a set of about twenty-four chairs and a settee which were arranged in the long corridors

at Ditton Park, the home of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu at Thames Ditton. From this and further known examples it would appear that Chippendale had not entirely lost his aristocratic clientèle and their important commissions.

He died in 1779 and was succeeded by his son—another Thomas. It was at this time that the Hepplewhite school became powerful, succeeded by that of Sheraton about 1790. Not a great deal is known of the work of the son but the Chippendale firm went out of existence in the bankruptcy court in 1805.

AMERICAN CHIPPENDALE FURNITURE

During the various periods taken as a whole we shall find that fine cabinet-making was well distributed through the northern portion of our country, but during the Chippendale régime Philadelphia and its neighbourhood is universally acknowledged to be supreme.

The reason is obvious. At this time Philadelphia was the most important city in the Colonies—in population, wealth, and cultivation of taste. Its affiliations, social and commercial, were close both with the planters of Virginia and with Charleston, then, as now, the most exclusive society in our land. In this respect Philadelphia itself is not unfamed. An aristocracy had grown up of cultivated people closely connected by marriage between prominent families and sustained by abundant means. The town was famous for its lawyers, physicians, and scientists. Foreign travel and a lavish home-life were but customary; yet this life was unpretentious and very solid. Philadelphia demanded the best and, having the money to pay for it, it, as usual, secured what it wished. Prominent among its demands were fine household goods. It is therefore a

far cry from simple, naïve work to the highly developed furniture that we are now to consider.

As the Philadelphia craftsmen did not adopt the Chippendale style till about 1760, whereas Chippendale had entered business in 1748 and had published his "Director" in 1754, naturally the whole field of his design, save his latest "French manner," was open to their choice. We shall soon see that the making of this furniture in the Philadelphia neighbourhood did not entirely cease for thirty years, and as any cabinet-maker might select a comparatively late model and five or fifteen years later work from an earlier one, it is not worth while to attempt to fix from their *style* the dates of American pieces. It is, however, essential to know which of the several Chippendale phases any piece may follow, and this will be indicated as the various illustrations are taken up.

Mahogany was of course the chosen wood for the rendering of this style; for no other material would have so well answered the demands made upon it for the durability of the elaborate carving of its fine pieces. Walnut was, however, employed to some considerable extent, and occasionally maple, in the simpler articles of furniture.

CHAIRS

The earliest phase in England was the development from the Decorated Queen Anne style—the pre-Chippendale type later adopted by him (Plate 15 A and B.)

It has already been mentioned that between the years 1730 and 1740, first the interlaced splat and then the cupid's-bow back were introduced, and Plate 11 shows a transition chair preserving Queen Anne features but introducing this cupid's-bow back-rail. Though its effects had become discernible earlier, it

was in this decade also that, as has been mentioned, French fashion became dominant in England and so remained for many years, French becoming even the fashionable language among the aristocracy. That Gallic ornament the cabochon, surrounded by the acanthus leaf, was then also introduced and became the favourite adornment of the knees of furniture. Variations of this are seen in the handsome sofa used by Washington and preserved in Independence Hall, see Plate 23, and the table 25 A. Between 1745 and 1750 the cabochon was more commonly abandoned, the acanthus spreading over the whole knee as in most examples here. This change may have been due to Chippendale, though he employed the cabochon occasionally throughout the course of his career, and appropriately and effectively revived it in his late "French manner." During this developing period of say 1730-45 the Queen Anne club foot, the claw-and-ball, and the paw-foot were all in use.

Rather earlier than the interlaced splat even was that with perpendicular piercings. It appeared in England as early as 1725-30. The slightly hollowed top rail seen in the two chairs by the fireplace in the Captain Cook room, Plate 130, was used in London about 1750-60.

In the central chair, from the Charles Wharton House, in Plate 136 will be noticed a carved rim or beading at the edge of the seat-rail and down the inside of the knees. This is a survival from the Queen Anne style. It occurs also in a labelled chair by James Gillingham, found not many years ago, and in the labelled lowboy by Thomas Tufft (Plate 44 B) later to be mentioned.

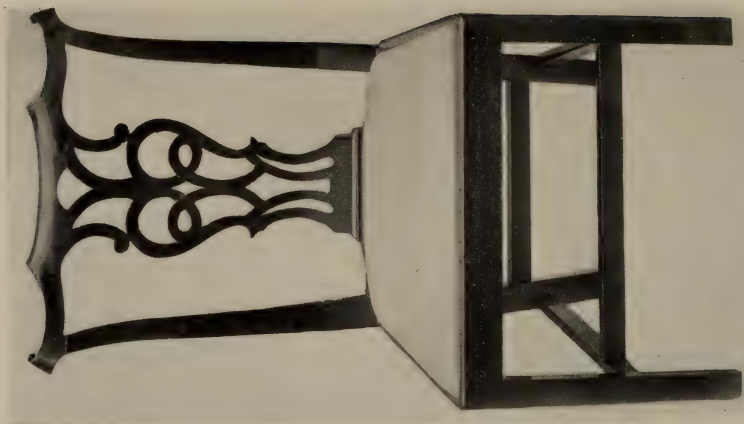
Two backs very closely resembling each other are those in Plate 16. With the last of these we reach the



A. and B. CHIPPENDALE CHAIRS OF QUEEN ANNE DERIVATION TYPE
By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York City

C. CHAIR WITH FRENCH LATTICE BACK

PLATE 16



B. CHAIR WITH STRAIGHT LEGS AND STRETCHERS
By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York



A. CHAIR FORMERLY OWNED BY GENERAL ANTHONY WAYNE
Loaned by John H. Halford, Esq., to Pennsylvania Museum



Photograph by Mary H. Northend

PHILADELPHIA CHAIR WITH DOUBLE-ARCHED SEAT-RAIL

By Courtesy of Dudley L. Pickman, Esq., Boston and Beverly, Mass.



Photograph by Whitenack

CHAIR WITH GOTHIC TENDENCIES IN BACK

One of the "Six Sample Chairs"

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



Photograph by Whitenack

CHAIR WITH GOTHIC BACK
One of the "Six Sample Chairs"
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnnyder, Esq



ELABORATE WING CHAIR AND DETAILS

One of the "six sample chairs"

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnnyder, Esq.

Photograph by Dillon



Photograph by Whitenack

UPHOLSTERED ARM CHAIR WITH CARVED FRET ORNAMENT

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.

PLATE 22



A. CHINESE CHIPPENDALE CHAIR, PERFORATED FRET



B. LADDER-BACK ARM AND SIDE CHAIR

All by Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York

straight leg reïntroduced into the furniture world by Chippendale in the first edition of his "Director." It is quite possible that he may have actually made chairs embodying this feature a year or so earlier and that others may have employed it, but this is its first appearance in print and it is universally conceded that to him belongs the credit. He used it and the cabriole leg indiscriminately even with his handsomest backs.

Before taking up Chippendale's later styles it will be well to consider certain points regarding our American workmanship, as these are in themselves illuminating.

So fully did the Philadelphia craftsmen capture the Chippendale spirit and so remarkable was their workmanship that it is admittedly difficult positively to say whether certain chairs are of English or of American make. The expert can usually determine, and he is aided by the knowledge of the following details often but not invariably to be found in our own workmanship:

Very occasionally in England during the Queen Anne period *back legs were rounded*, but if existent, this feature is most uncommon there in the Chippendale style: it is very frequent in Philadelphia chairs and will be seen in Plates 15 B, 16 A, and other examples.

In England the seat-rails were almost invariably narrow: very occasionally indeed after the Queen Anne régime are they cut out at the bottom into a flat arch, and then this arch is slight. In America the seat-rails were wider, and the arch, more deeply cut, was frequent. See Plates 15 and 16 A.

The tenoning of the side-rails of the seat *through* the back-supports, or stiles, for the gaining of greater strength, was commonly practised here, and in such cases the ends of the tenons can be discerned at the

back. For the same reason these seat-rails were often made heavier here than in England.

In America the shell, so extensively used as an ornament in Queen Anne days, persists into the Chippendale period and will be seen in the illustrations again and again. In England it went quite definitely out of use about 1745 and only occurs sporadically. I remember no English Chippendale chair in which it appears as the sole ornament in the centre of an otherwise plain seat-rail. And such a tremendous example as that in the chair to the right of the fireplace in the Philadelphia Room, Frontispiece, is certainly most unusual here, being reminiscent of the huge ornaments so frequent in the so-called "Irish" Chippendale furniture made in the West of England. The claw-and-ball foot in which the ball is not rounded but is flat at the bottom is characteristic of the Philadelphia group and will be seen in many examples here.

There are differences in proportion which are rather subtle but which will be apprehended by the comparison of a number of examples. As Dr. Woodhouse expresses it: "American chairs tend to be smaller in the seat than English chairs, especially narrower at the rear of the seat. American chairs, however, have higher backs than contemporary English pieces."

Chippendale and his followers gave quite various finishes to the ends of his cupid's-bow backs and to some extent this was followed here. One of the best known of them is that appearing in Plate 15 C, *but* in Philadelphia chairs the middle rib frequently projects beyond the other two, as in the same plate figs. A and B. A friend humourously refers to this protuberance as "the Philadelphia peanut."

If none of these particular details occurred one would not be safe in deciding that a chair was not

American, for several of the Philadelphia group of craftsmen during this period came from London and would be likely closely to follow English shop-traditions. Furthermore, considerable furniture was imported—and particularly such smaller pieces as chairs and tables. If an American cabinet-maker were following such an English piece as a model he would be quite likely to follow it exactly, and especially if the two were to be used together. We might therefore encounter a *set* of chairs of which some were imported and others of American make.

If two of the above mentioned features occur in one chair it is almost surely of American origin.

A chair regarding which there was formerly considerable difference of opinion is shown in Plate 15 C. The whole back is particularly graceful and its splat contains the French latticed quatre-foil ornament which may have been introduced by Chippendale. The entire back-design is very like these English examples and the chair was sometimes thought to be of English origin. It has however been inspected by several experts who definitely pronounce it American. Its wide and solid deeply arched seat-rails would indicate this. The unsparing use of mahogany in the knees may perhaps also point in this direction. It is a very fine chair.

It is still necessary to use the word "group" when writing of the Philadelphia cabinet-makers—and it is a large group. Notwithstanding the fruitful researches of recent years it is still impossible to name the makers of a large proportion of the most notable cabinet-pieces. The matter is complicated by the fact that the same professional carvers worked for many of the cabinet-makers, so that a comparison of ornament is not a guide. Dr. Woodhouse in a cautious and well-reasoned article

in *Antiques* for May, 1927 shows us that Benjamin Randolph was prominent among the cabinet-makers and Hercules Courtenay among the carvers but there were others probably equally so.

Jefferson states that Randolph made the box-desk on which the Declaration of Independence was drafted. Courtenay describes himself in his advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, August 14, 1769, as "Carver and Gilder, from London." He was married the previous year at Old Swedes, Philadelphia.

The names of many other Philadelphia craftsmen are known and we shall meet some of them as we proceed. Thomas Affleck, Joseph Deleveau, Edward James, James Gillingham, John Folwell and others were also prominent. The most remarkable pieces of Chippendale furniture were made between 1762 and the outbreak of the Revolution. Indications seem to point to a larger use here of the third edition of the "Director" (1762) than the first. The last edition contained many additional plates.

THE GOTHIC, CHINESE, AND ROCOCO PHASES, WITH COMBINATIONS

The Gothic tradition had been broken by the Renaissance, and in Chippendale's time there was little understanding or appreciation of this great style. Notwithstanding the cathedrals and churches before their very eyes, to say nothing of the even more glorious Gothic architecture of France, the "Gothic" of Batty Langley, Walpole, and others was but a travesty. Remembering, too, the unsuitability of this ecclesiastical style to modern domestic purposes, it is not surprising that this phase should be the least satisfactory of Chippendale's work. He himself may have felt this, for it was not long persisted in, though he

continued to use suggestions of Gothic tracery in the splats of his chairs and with very happy results. Two examples of this use are seen in the American chairs in Plates 18 and 19. There are few specimens of the American following of the more definitely Gothic Chippendale pieces—or as definite as he knew how to make them—and we are not much the poorer.

The “Director” also illustrated the Chinese phase, and here one may speak in greater admiration. *Chinoiserie* had been “in the air” all through Europe, from the days of Louis Quatorze: it was rampant in the decoration and furniture of his successor, and much of its spirit enters into the Rococo style itself. It was not to be expected that this oriental art, with all its subtlety, should closely be apprehended by Western minds and temperaments, and it is quite as well that an absolute transference was not attempted. Such an endeavour would but have resulted in a bastard product. The aim was not faithfully to *imitate* Chinese art but to *use* it as suggestion and inspiration for the carrying out of a delightful fancy. Nothing could be more successful than some of the effects obtained in France, through the employment in this way of its lighter and grotesque phases.

While Chippendale as an Englishman was less lighthanded in its employment this resulted in perhaps a greater *bottom* to his achievement: there was abundant fancy, while a considerable degree of dignity was often conserved. This furniture, with the aid of Chinese wall-paper and accessories, was intended for the constituting of interiors of a Chinese type and its success is evidenced by the persistence of this vogue to-day.

But, furthermore, there are the very fine and dignified chairs and tables still called “Chinese Chippendale” but which employ so little of the oriental char-

after beyond the fascinating fret, the brackets, and the generally rectangular contour that it is better to term it Fretted Furniture. Two fine examples are illustrated here—Plate 22 A with the pierced or open fret and Plate 21 with fret applied. Indeed in the latter case it is carved ornament rather than fret. Such chairs as this may be employed in any room to which other Chippendale furniture would be appropriate.

In the first edition of the "Director" Chippendale reserved Rococo ornament, as applied to *chairs*, mainly for his "Ribband-backs" and the elaborate upholstered chairs he called French—not to be confused with those in his late "French manner"—though we find touches of the Rococo here and there in his other chair designs. Only simple patterns of the first style and none of the second were made here, but there are elaborate chairs of other character—those *combining* various tendencies. One scarcely knows whether most to admire Chippendale's verve, virility, and variety of design or his astonishing ability in combining apparently incongruous elements. And in both respects the Philadelphia cabinet-makers sealed themselves of the tribe of Chippendale! Mr. Pickman's fine example—Plate 17—is generally of the Queen Anne development type but refined, charmingly ornamented, and showing above the rolled-up French foot a definitely Rococo scroll. The double-arched seat-rail with central shell is most unusual in England. I know of but one English chair, in the hands of a London dealer, having a quite similar double arch with the shell at the centre, and it is not nearly so well designed.

Two chairs owned by Mr. Reifsnnyder—Plates 18 and 19—have Gothic tendencies in their splats and

are generally of the Queen Anne development type but with French features introduced.

One of these beautiful chairs—Plate 18—is not quite so Rococo as a glance would indicate—it is Rococo in spirit rather than in the letter. Free and flowing as is its ornament a closer examination shows it still to possess much of the character of the earlier acanthus-leaf decoration. The other chair—Plate 19—is full of definitely Rococo details. But more Gallic still is the celebrated Cadwalader pier-table now in the Metropolitan Museum—Plate 24. Both of Mr. Reifsnnyder's chairs have the lovely rolled-up French foot used in England about 1745-50 (introduced by Chippendale?) and distinctly fashionable between 1760 and 1770. Both have the rounded back leg but in neither do the side rails pierce through the stiles.

A tradition exists in Philadelphia of six sample chairs, all different and five of them elaborate, and this tradition is discussed by Dr. Woodhouse in the article on Randolph previously referred to (*Antiques* for May, 1927). Plates 18 and 19 show two of those chairs, and Mr. Reifsnnyder is the happy possessor of still a third—the magnificent wing-chair illustrated in Plate 20. Five of the six chairs have been purchased from the descendants of the stepson of Benjamin Randolph and presumably they came from his shop. The other remains in the family of original ownership.

Some of these six chairs possess special American characteristics and some do not; and, as it does not seem to have occurred to others, I would suggest here that there is no reason apparent why Randolph (or another) should not have possessed six splendid chairs, used as samples, some of which he himself made and some of which he imported.

Of the six the most elaborate example is in the

possession of Henry W. Erving, Esq., of Hartford, Connecticut, and it is illustrated in the article. It shows none of the American characteristics. After a close study not only of its design (for which in its various portions there are precedents in the first and third editions of the "Director" and in fine existing English chairs) but considering the perfection of ease and swing with which this design is handled I should have been inclined to say that it is an English chair and very probably from the establishment in St. Martin's Lane. I understand, however, that it has been examined by English experts and that they find certain differences in cabinet-work between it and their own practice.

From these magnificent examples of craftsmanship we may turn to the simple but excellent ladder-backs (see Plate 22 B) with the invention of which type Chippendale is credited. To the writer's mind at least they are much superior as furniture to the best Windsors. And their lines agree with those of other pieces, as the spidery, canted lines of Windsors do not.

The roundabout chair persists from the previous period, but now naturally possesses the Chippendale characteristics. The same is true of the big and comfortable wing chair.

The stool at the foot of the bedstead in Plate 46 is a simple example of the following of Chippendale's "French manner." Sometimes, as here, the knees remained entirely plain—a revival of the unornamented type of Queen Anne—and sometimes it was adorned with the cabochon, a Gallic derivation. In any case the rolled-up Louis XV foot with *toe* was used.

Chippendale chairs were of course made elsewhere in America than in Philadelphia. The New England examples for the most part seem to be simple and some-

times stiff—the style as a whole was probably not congenial to its temperament and was not so well apprehended as in Philadelphia. It is quite possible that many of the finer Chippendale pieces found in New England were either brought from Philadelphia or were imported. But John Brinner, to give a New York instance quoted by Mr. Lockwood, advertises in 1762 all sorts of current furniture including “Gothic and Chinese chairs.” He was from London and had brought over “six Artificers, well-skilled in the above branches.”

SETTEES AND SOFAS

In addition to the multiple chair-back settees we find day-beds and window-seats following the various Chippendale phases and also upholstered sofas.

That appearing in Plate 23 A was used in the Executive mansion on High Street during the years that Washington lived in Philadelphia as President of the United States. On his return to Mt. Vernon it was sold to Robert Morris and is now in Independence Hall, having been presented by the Union League. It is a fine example with beautifully designed knee and the paw-foot. The camel-back is the usual pre-Chippendale and Chippendale style, but the arms here spread rather more than usual. The most frequent form of rolled arm is that seen in the next example on the same plate. This has the fretted straight leg with stretchers; but cabriole legs were also used with the same construction of arms and back.

Another type of sofa is a derivation from the Louis XV style and is naturally very French in general appearance.

TABLES

The trades of chair-maker and cabinet-maker, previously separate, were united by Chippendale, who

not only made all kinds of furniture but in his alliance with Adam supplied draperies and other articles of interior-decoration as well. We naturally expect, therefore, that other legged furniture would closely agree with the various types of chair-legs. Furthermore, as the aprons of tables and legged cabinet-pieces occupy a position similar to the seat-rails of chairs, these follow the same treatment; being plain, or with gadroon moulding, or with carved ornament. It is only necessary then to refer to the various tables in use.

The American *dining-tables* of this period seem simply to have continued the types of the previous era, being of drop-leaf form like the example on the left wall of Plate 130 or composed of a central table with two separate end-tables, when it was necessary to seat a larger number of persons.

A handsome *pier-table* is shown in the like position in the Philadelphia Room, frontispiece; but the finest example known is that from the Cadwalader house, Philadelphia, and now in the Metropolitan Museum (Plate 24). Because of the Gallic freedom shown in the Rococo ornament of this table and some other fine pieces it has been suggested that their carver was of French blood or training, but a glance at but one detail of this table shows Chippendale as its inspiration: whereas in the work of the *ébénistes* of Louis XV the *shoe* is either absent or of modest dimensions, Chippendale made of it a feature—and it is repeated here. The swing and lightness evident in this piece are probably due to the freedom of the American interpretation of the style. Certain it is that some one of our craftsmen had a love for the human face and figure, for one or the other is introduced in several pieces of furniture of this school. These pier-tables frequently had marble tops, as in the illustrated instances.



Photograph by Philip B. Wallace

A. WASHINGTON SOFA IN INDEPENDENCE HALL



B. TYPICAL ROLL-ARM SOFA, WITH STRETCHERS. FRETTED LEGS

By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City



CHIPPENDALE ROCOCO PIER-TABLE FROM CADWALADER HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA
By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City



A. CARD-TABLE OF PRE-CHIPPENDALE DESIGN
By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc.



B. PIE-CRUST, TRIPOD TEA-TABLE
By Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia

PLATE 26



CARD-TABLE WITH FRENCH LATTICE CORNERS

A wonderful example of Philadelphia carving

Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Stevenson to the Pennsylvania Museum



Photograph by Whirenack

A. GALLERIED TABLE WITH ORNAMENTAL, RAISED STRETCHER AND BRACKETS



Photograph by Dillon

B. SMALL TABLE WITH STRAIGHT LEGS AND BRACKETS

Both by Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



Photograph by Dillon

A. BLOCK-FRONT DRESSING-TABLE MADE OUTSIDE OF RHODE ISLAND
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



B. DESK BELIEVED TO BE BY JOHN GODDARD, NEWPORT, R. I.
By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City



A. AN EARLY DUTCH-COLONIAL DESK IN CEYLON

A Prototype of the American Block-front

By Courtesy of *The Connoisseur*, London



B. RIBBAND-BACK CHAIR AND FIRE-SCREENS

From Chippendale's "Director," 1754



CHIPPENDALE BOOK-CASE WITH GOTHIC TRACERY
Property of the Author

Sideboards were not made or used during the Chippendale period, long side-tables of appropriately formal character fulfilling this function in England. Probably very few handsome examples were made in this country, their place being taken by sufficiently large tables of the type of that in Plate 27 B or with cabriole legs.

Tea-drinking had long been the rage in London and the cargo of tea spilled into Boston harbour before the Revolution is but one indication of the extent to which the custom attained here. The tripod-table was a favourite for this function, but any other small table, such as that with gallery-top and raised stretcher (Plate 27 A), or the Pembroke might be employed.

The tripod was made in infinite variety, most of them having the pie-crust (raised) edge as in the fine table illustrated in Plate 25 B. This edge might be plain, elaborately carved, or galleried. Another example with the top tilted will be seen in Plate 138. The tops frequently were also made to turn.

The Pembrokes were small two-lidded tables of various forms. A transition piece appears in Plate 72 but they were often of slenderer build with plain or clustered legs and sometimes with saltire, or crossed, stretchers. They were also called "book-tables," but of them Sheraton rather quaintly says: "The use of the piece is for a gentleman or lady to breakfast on. The style of finishing these tables is very neat, sometimes bordering upon elegance." Chippendale, too, calls them breakfast tables. Doubtless they were often employed as what we now call "occasional" tables—for any purpose to which at the moment they might be convenient.

We do not need the numerous references to "loo" and other games of chance to inform us how wide-

spread was card-playing here: the number of card-tables and the care lavished upon them are sufficient evidence. Even staid New England (and especially in the next period) is famous for the workmanship of its many examples. These card-tables naturally appear in the several Chippendale styles and, being so charming and useful, three examples are illustrated here. That in Plate 25 A—a pre-Chippendale design—has the claw-and-ball foot and one of the varieties of the cabochon knee: a splayed gadroon moulding ornaments the skirt. Plate 26 is one of the finest examples in the country and is shown by special permission of the owners. It is a wonderful specimen of Philadelphia design, workmanship, and clean-cut carving. In these tables the shallow circular depressions were provided for the holding of candlesticks, while the deeper oval hollows were for counters or money. The double lids not only open but swing. Plate 27 B shows a very attractive example with grooved straight legs, brackets, and bead-and-reel moulding. It will be noted that the handles in this and the first mentioned example are identical.

The various ingenious treatments of the insides of legs in this period are well worth observation. In the table Plate 27 B they are rounded; in the one above it they are chamfered in two places, above and below the stretcher: in the chair shown in Plate 21 they remain square: while in Plate 22 A the legs are L-shaped so as to allow the pierced fret.

BOOK-CASES, DESKS, AND SECRETARIES

I cannot but feel that the so often mentioned paucity of books in America is somewhat exaggerated. In 1638 Cambridge had its printing-press—it is said before Glasgow, Manchester, and Liverpool in Great

Britain itself. And one has but to look through the long lists of Americana in rare-book catalogues to realise the number of volumes published here, to say nothing of the multitude that were imported. It would be unfair to refer to the eminent men who, we know, possessed extensive libraries. Doubtless the average family owned few books as compared with that of to-day, where we find a book-case or two in almost every home—though perhaps the less attention we call to the quality of their contents the more discreet we shall be. But the Chippendale period produced not only that extremely convenient piece of furniture the secretary-bookcase but many such book-cases as the type illustrated in Plate 30. Here again, however, fairness compels me to own that the top of the secretary-bookcase might be, and frequently was, used for chinaware.

The book-case illustrated (Plate 30) has Gothic arched tracery, chamfered, fluted corners, and ogee bracket feet.

A taller, still finer, example also owned by the writer cannot be photographed because of its situation in a narrow hall. It has a rectangular and diagonal tracery, two lower drawers, dentil moulding at the top, and splayed gadroon at the bottom, and block feet. The very large "break-front" library book-cases were common in England, but few were constructed in this country.

Desks were made in the current Chippendale styles, with claw-and-ball, straight bracket, and ogee bracket feet. But the specimens illustrated in Plate 28 A and B bring us to the block-front, which is universally considered not only an American but more particularly a New England development.

The form does not exist in England and such a

special type is seldom an out-and-out invention. Where then did it come from? It is quite frequent in the early furniture of Holland and its East Indian Colonies, and there are suggestions of it in France. It possibly originated in the Orient and it will at any rate be interesting to see the early Dutch Colonial writing-cabinet in Ceylon illustrated in Plate 29 A. Many early Puritans came direct from Holland or from Holland by way of England: a knowledge of the type or even the existence of such a piece in New England is entirely possible. And this type was made in New England and nowhere else.

If the curves of the Dutch cabinet were straightened we should have a close approximation to our American block-front. Our craftsmen developed the form into such charming pieces as those in Plates 28 B and 31. John Goddard of Newport is famous as the foremost exponent of the type but it should probably be called Townsend-Goddard, for Goddard learned his trade with Job Townsend, married his daughter and likely inherited the style. As a secretary known to have been made by Goddard has the particular form of shell topping the block and the special style of beading on the bracket feet shown in Figure B of Plate 28 this piece is ascribed to him.

Where they occur, the shell and this form of ogee feet with the additional beaded scroll indicate that the piece was made in Rhode Island and probably by Goddard. Occasionally the shell was omitted in this section. John Townsend of Middletown, Connecticut, had his training at Newport and his work shows that affinity but had not the Goddard characteristics.

The illustration immediately above this shows a knee-hole block-front dressing-table, though, as they might be used as writing-tables if desired, they are often called knee-hole desks. It has straight bracket

feet, and is of the type made elsewhere than at Newport. It will be noted that in both of these the block extends downward through the feet, a characteristic of the fine pieces.

Plate 31 shows a secretary-bookcase representing the best northern New England type. Its upper section is tall and with scrolled and hooded top accompanied by three spiral finials. There are two slides for candlesticks beneath this upper section. The pilasters on its front are a survival from the "architect's furniture" of Queen Anne. When the doors are closed the pilasters undoubtedly add much to the appearance of the piece, but they are of course amusingly illogical and inconsequent, inasmuch as when the doors are opened the pilasters applied to them go with them, so supporting nothing and leaving their upper blocks upon the frame. Chippendale avoided pilasters and they do not appear in his work. In these block-fronts the bracket and the claw-and-ball foot are indiscriminately used.

The very fine secretary illustrated in Plate 32 is in typical Chippendale style though in general of pre-Chippendale design. The lower panelling is of the Batty Langley type adopted by this school. The scroll top with leaf extension to the also scrolled rosettes is seen in the "Director," and the fretted front and ornamented ogee bracket feet are characteristic. Indeed the whole piece is an exceedingly close following of English models, but its finish with American pine stamps its origin.

The Rittenhouse clock in Drexel Institute, Philadelphia, also has the scrolled rosettes with leaf extensions, as does one of the finest of the highboys here illustrated—Plate 36.

A very few secretary-bookcases with bombé (kettle)

base were made here. Some of these have the block-front as well.

HIGHBOYS AND LOWBOYS: CHESTS-OF-DRAWERS
AND DOUBLE CHESTS

Among these we find some of the most splendid examples of American craftsmanship.

In England the highboy of Queen Anne times was now discontinued, because of the inconvenience in reaching the high upper drawers and probably also simply in answer to a demand for a change in fashion or a wish on the part of cabinet-makers to exploit a new mode. Perchance we do not often enough take into account this very human itch for change. If the Grand Rapids manufacturer of to-day feels that to "keep in the procession" he must provide a brand-new style every season, surely a live eighteenth century craftsman may be granted an occasional leaning in that direction. And Chippendale says: "if no one drawing should singly answer the gentleman's taste, there will yet be found a variety of hints sufficient to construct a new one."

In any event Chippendale in the "Director" gives the social world a most liberal choice of substitutes for the discarded highboy. He provides numerous designs for plain and for the very decorative commode, clothes-presses (wardrobes) and double-chests of but moderate height. He gives one design for a highboy, but with straight, fretted legs, flat top, and the right half occupied by a cupboard. Strange to say he also goes back to the antiquity of furniture-making and supplies a number of designs for *chests*—that most primitive and inconvenient of storage-pieces. He *shows* no chests-of-drawers but very fine ones with his characteristics were made at this period.



Photograph by Mary H. Northend

BLOCK-FRONT SECRETARY-BOOKCASE OF THE BEST NORTHERN NEW
ENGLAND TYPE

Property of Dr. Ernest Noyes, Newburyport, Mass.



CHIPPENDALE SECRETARY-BOOKCASE CLOSELY RESEMBLING
ENGLISH EXAMPLES

By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City



Photograph by Whitenack

A PHILADELPHIA CHIPPENDALE ROCOCO HIGHBOY IN UNTOUCHED
CONDITION

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq., Philadelphia



PHILADELPHIA HIGHBOY WITH BONNET-TOP
By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum



PHILADELPHIA HIGHBOY WITH ESPECIALLY BEAUTIFUL APRON CARVING
Loaned by Francis P. Garvan, Esq., to the Metropolitan Museum



PHILADELPHIA HIGHBOY WITH SEPARATE PEDIMENT
Loaned by the Estate of Mary Fell Howe to the Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia



SMALL HIGHBOY WITH FLAT TOP
Property of Mrs. E. S. Holloway



ROCOCO COMMUNE OF AUTHENTIC CHIPPENDALE ORIGIN
From the Collection of the late Richard A. Canfield

In New England the highboy remained utilitarian though some excellent pieces were made there. Pennsylvania lavished upon it all the wealth of Chippendale ornament, and made of it a thing of beauty: with the double-chest it did the same: and later it also provided some excellent low chests-of-drawers.

In the first edition of the "Director" Chippendale shows but one example of the scrolled pediment while he repeatedly employs the triangular form: yet from the "Director" years till well towards the end of his career many of the loveliest examples were made with the scroll pediment and fret as in the American pieces in Plates 36 and 39.

Lowboys, used as dressing-tables, continued to be made to match the highboys. The lowboy appearing in Plate 136 belonged to Thomas Sully.

The beaded edge previously mentioned occurs in an excellent labelled lowboy by Thomas Tufft of Philadelphia, who was married in 1766, acquired property in 1779, bought the shop mentioned in his label in 1780, and who was dead by 1793.

This is the first piece by Tufft that has been found and is the most recent discovery of thus authenticated furniture. It is due to Dr. Samuel W. Woodhouse, Jr., associate of the Pennsylvania Museum. The lowboy is owned by Mrs. Edgar Wright Baird, and is reproduced in Plate 44 B by her permission and through the kindness of Dr. Woodhouse who has also loaned me his photograph.

A beautiful highboy is illustrated in Plate 43.

It had been owned by Joseph Wharton, was in use at his home, Walnut Grove, when the Mischianza was held there during the British occupancy of Philadelphia in 1778, and bears a brass plate to this effect. It is now owned by his lineal descendant Joseph Wharton Lip-

pincott, President of the J. B. Lippincott Company.

It contains three labels of William Savery and is the *only* labelled highboy by him so far discovered. It shows the high quality of Savery's work and, having been carefully preserved by the family, is in fine condition.

It has cabochon knees and the beaded edge to the apron.

A curious circumstance is here worth mention: the quarter-section column that forms the corner-finish of so many of these cabinet-pieces (Plates 33-35) was used in the Queen Anne period in both countries: in America it was continued in the Chippendale style: in England it was abandoned for cabinet-pieces, but used on clock-cases; and in the exceedingly rare instances in which it did appear in cabinet-pieces it was probably adopted from the clocks.

Two types of cabinet-pieces will at once be noted—those in which the pediment is separate from the front (Plates 36 and 39) and those in which they are not separated by a cornice (Plates 33-35).

In Plate 34 the top is hooded: in the other examples it is not.

Attention has not previously been called to the virily carved flower as being a favourite termination to the scroll pediment on the part of one or more of the Philadelphia group. It also appears on the clock-case illustrated in Plate 139. The flower terminal appeared in English pieces but not so finely developed as in the American examples.

Beautifully handled Rococo scrolls form the principal ornament of Plates 33-35 but it will be noted that the acanthus leaf is adhered to on the knees, as the decoration best accompanying the claw-and-ball

foot. The fret is used as a frieze in Plates 32 and 39, that in the latter being bold and of unusual design. In all these pieces the wood and the workmanship are of the highest quality. No duplicates of any of them have been discovered.

The double-chest illustrated in Plate 40 is an incongruous but imposing piece of furniture. It came from the Elias Hasket Derby mansion at Salem, Massachusetts, of which the famous Samuel McIntire was architect and the chest was long attributed to him, though by another hand. The base is Chippendale but the top is wholly in the classic vein.

The flat-top highboy illustrated in Plate 37 is but 4 ft., 6½ in. high and 3 ft. wide and is admirably adapted to an apartment. Such pretty little pieces show the same care in the choice of material and the same impeccable workmanship as the larger and more highly ornamented examples: in this highboy the panels at the sides are of the choicest curled mahogany veneer.

I am particularly happy in being able to show, for the first time, through the kindness of Mr. Reifsnnyder, a high chest-of-drawers in his fine collection—Plate 41. It is the latest-made piece of Chippendale furniture yet discovered, and its date in contemporary inlay is indisputable proof that this furniture was made in the Philadelphia neighbourhood as late as 1793. It was found at Bristol, twenty miles from Philadelphia, and the initials would indicate the probability of its having been a marriage-chest.

The chest-of-drawers illustrated in Plate 42 is of double interest: it is the labelled work of a cabinet-maker so recently "discovered"—thanks to the tireless investigators of the staff and associates of its owner, the Pennsylvania Museum—that his name has

appeared in no previous furniture-book; and the label itself is one of the proofs that Chippendale furniture continued to be made here after the Revolution.

Jonathan Gostelow was a cabinet-maker of distinction in Philadelphia, a vestryman of Christ Church—for which he made the baptismal-font and a table-altar—and during the Revolution was commissioned a Major. At the end of the war he “resumed his former occupation,” as the label reads, as did other craftsmen.

This serpentine chest-of-drawers is a fine mahogany piece with chamfered and fluted corners and ogee bracket feet. Two of the elaborate escutcheons remain: the original handles would of course have matched them in character.

This piece closely follows some of the English examples, but it was doubtless felt that for a low chest the appearance of the bracket feet is too heavy, and Chippendale obviated this by narrowing the chamfered corners and hollowing the sides, thus bringing the corners more towards a point and correspondingly reducing the width of the feet.

Many excellent straight-front chests-of-drawers were made. The bow-front illustrated in Plate 44 A, with oval handles, is late and possesses no Chippendale characteristics beyond its legs and feet. It is probably of New England make. The claw-and-ball of some other late pieces is particularly feeble.

BEDSTEADS

The state bedsteads of England were not in use here. A fine example of the type made in America is shown in Plate 45. The head posts were plain, as they were intended to be covered by draperies: the posts at the foot of this bed are reeded and the whole elaborately carved leg is *detachable* from the post. This bed-



Photograph by Whitenack

DOUBLE-CHEST-OF-DRAWERS WITH SEPARATE FRETTED PEDIMENT AND
FRIEZE OF UNUSUAL DESIGN

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



DOUBLE-CHEST FROM THE ELIAS HASKET DERBY HOUSE, SALEM, MASS.
The figures are believed to have been carved by Samuel McIntire
Loaned by Francis P. Garvan, Esq., to the Metropolitan Museum.

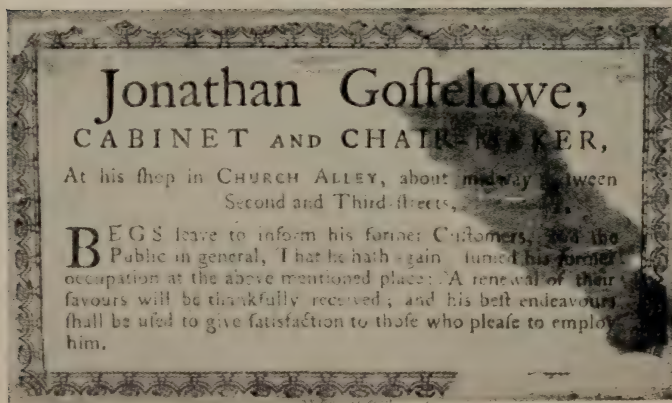


Photograph by Whitenack

MARRIAGE HIGH-CHEST IN WALNUT OF THE PHILADELPHIA NEIGHBOURHOOD

The latest-made piece of Chippendale furniture as yet discovered

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



CHEST-OF-DRAWERS AND LABEL THEREIN OF JONATHAN GOSTELOWE
PHILADELPHIA

Made just after the Revolution
By Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Museum



JOSEPH WHARTON HIGHBOY, IN USE DURING THE MISCHIANZA, 1778

The only Highboy with William Savery labels so far discovered

Property of Joseph Wharton Lippincott, Esq.

PLATE 44



A. LATE BOW-FRONT CHEST-OF-DRAWERS
By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum



B. LABELLED LOWBOY MADE BY THOMAS TUFFT, PHILADELPHIA
By Courtesy of the owner, Mrs. Edgar Wright Baird
and of Dr. Samuel W. Woodhouse, Jr.



Photograph by Whitenack

FOUR-POST BEDSTEAD OF PRE-CHIPPENDALE DESIGN. C. 1760

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



GEORGIAN BEDSTEAD, CHIPPENDALE STOOL AND LOWBOY, SHERATON BASIN-STAND AND CHAIR
By Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia

stead is really of pre-Chippendale design as its features occurred in England before his advent into business. The bedstead in Plate 46 is still earlier and is definitely of the Georgian period.

1937

In the first edition of this book I have noted the issue of the volume "Thomas Chippendale; a Review of His Life and Origin," by Edwin J. Layton, John Murray, London, 1928. In it the author, solely on the ground of "probability," declines to accept the identity of Thomas Chippendale of Otley and Thomas Chippendale of London and goes back to the old tradition—not indeed old, for it is based on an account given in Samuel Redgrave's "Dictionary of Artists, etc.," published as late as 1874.

That account is given as follows:

He was a native of Worcestershire, came to London, when he first found employment as a joiner, and by his own industry and taste was, in the reign of George I., most eminent as a carver and cabinet-maker.

In the last year of the reign of George I (1727) *the* Thomas Chippendale was a child 10 years of age. The account must therefore refer to a father. But why does it mention the father's "eminence" before 1727 and totally ignore that of the son 25 to 35 years nearer Redgrave's own time and which far exceeded his possible father's prominence? The account is, to say the least of it, deficient and confused.

If a father of the famous Thomas Chippendale was in business before him (which is not on the face of it improbable but is not proven) some record must remain, especially if he were so eminent, and it would appear to be "up to" Englishmen to discover it. When did he die? If there is no record of his life is there not of his death?

The success of a literary American in unearthing actual documents of major importance in the lives of Shelley, Marlowe, and Shakespeare may be recalled.

Waiting further discoveries, argument is futile and the reader may withhold his judgment.

This volume makes no mention of the bankruptcy of the younger Thomas Chippendale and apparently he was in business till his death. His will was proved January 28, 1823.

FURNITURE

THE FEDERAL STYLES

HEPPLEWHITE, SHEARER
AND EARLY SHERATON
AMERICAN *DIRECTOIRE*
AMERICAN EMPIRE



HEPPLEWHITE, SHEARER, AND EARLY SHERATON

THE NEW NATION

IN SEPTEMBER 1782 the preliminaries of peace between Great Britain and America were concluded at Paris and the treaty was signed the following year—when the Revolution is commonly regarded as ending.

The Colonies had become a Federation of States—a nation: and *its furniture was no longer Colonial, but Federal*. Chippendale was the last Colonial style.

But—London still remained the seat of fashion for America; the new styles were quite as British as the old! For eight long years we had struggled, and the end was not yet. After the separation many questions naturally arose for settlement—particularly those regarding trade relations and, later, the impressment of American seamen—and these led to irritation and bitterness enduring for another thirty years. As usual, pride, prejudice, and mere policy—three enemies of peace—did their work. Vision was lacking on both sides: no broad outlook for the future or spirit of kindly accommodation existed, every temporary advantage was seized; and so again, in 1812, came war. “Two days before its declaration the principal pretext had been removed and had the electric telegraph existed there would have been no war.”

Notwithstanding these events and the development here of the national and social consciousness appropriate to an independent and complete organisation, English influence retained its power. Our newspapers of these early years give large space to British

news and social intelligence. There were announcements of goods just received from England, and occasionally the advertisement of some artisan newly arrived on our shores, with, of course, the latest styles in vogue in London. And so we kept abreast with the times. Notwithstanding our separation, England was still regarded as the "home country."

If, superficially, this seems strange, do we not find the case of England herself far more so? For centuries, Britain and France had been traditional enemies, yet—and especially from the accession of Charles II—the influence of French style upon England was enormous, and never more so than when Great Britain with Continental aid was doing her utmost to crush the power of Napoleon the First. In our case it is to be remembered that we were of British blood and were imbued with British thought and habit; and, though we were rapidly developing American characteristics, traditional impulses are exceedingly difficult to escape.

But by the side of these inherited tendencies we find the French influence, later to become so dominant in the enthusiasm over Lafayette's visit in 1824 and 1825. It was now already strong, but double-edged in its effect upon our people. It is an absorbing story; would that there were adequate room for it here!

Many illustrious French names are among those of the exiles to this country from the days of the Huguenots till well on into the nineteenth century. These first *émigrés* soon assimilated themselves into our American life. In 1792 came the refugees from the revolution in St. Domingo, also those fleeing from that in France, and finally many of the Revolutionary party itself, after the restoration of order. To the South, Baltimore, New York, and especially Philadelphia, they came in numbers, Catholics and Free-

thinkers alike—most of them adaptable, genial and cheerful in surmounting their misfortunes, a few lofty, critical, and troubling. In Philadelphia they were welcomed by Mrs. Bingham and by the influential Philosophical Society, of which a number became valued members. Many Philadelphians were imbued with the Gallic craze and took on French manners and ways of thinking. On the other hand the cynical lack of principle of Talleyrand (whom Washington refused to receive), the activities of Citizen Genet, the cold yet peevish criticism of Volney, and the like, had their contrary effect, so that the latter on reëmbarking in 1798 speaks of the “epidemic animosity against the French.” It was much more likely sporadic, and directed solely against those who had made *themselves* unwelcome.

One phase of the matter is distinctly curious. We already know of the lavish scale of living in Philadelphia; we are aware, too, of the very democratic opinions of the men to be mentioned. But they were men of birth and used to the high life of Continental Europe, and it seems strange that Volney should condemn the growing luxury in America, expecting it to draw down upon us incursions from the Algerian pirates, and that Brissot de Warville also inveighed against the “luxury and refinement of American cities as a decay of republican simplicity.”

Why should any one expect American cities in their human aspects to be very different from other cities? The Quaker has never been accused of inability to make and to hold the dollar, and though he lived simply he lived exceeding well: the New Englander found no incompatibility between cast-iron virtue and that form of near-piracy called privateering: New York was established as a trading-post and cer-

tainly has never failed in living up to its primary purpose. It *always was* a mad world, my masters! and with a vast deal of humbug. Through the ages the wealthy have lived extravagantly and there are no indications of their ceasing to do so.

The effect upon our furniture and decoration of all this French influence was to appear in its fulness a few years later—and we shall realise, perhaps with some surprise, how much of it even then came by way of London!

But in the years we are now to consider the styles of Hepplewhite and Sheraton held the field.

By about 1790 America was fully ready for these new styles in furniture and decoration. Furniture designed in the Shearer and Hepplewhite modes was made here as much as five years earlier, but we can now see the full flowering of the Classic styles.

Our infant nation had experienced the usual troubles of childhood and had with difficulty found its own political feet. Now it stood alone, alert and vigorous. The Constitution went into force in 1789. In the same year Washington was inaugurated first President, and again as leader was proving himself both strong and wise. The battle for Democracy was already on, but society and politics remained essentially aristocratic. Financially we were fast recovering from the exhaustion of war; again there was money to spend and a desire for the amenities and luxuries of life.

THE NEW STYLES

We may very briefly see how the new styles came into being; for all these matters have to do with the very existence of the American furniture of this period—one of the finest of them all. The discovery of the

buried Roman cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii early in the century had caused a permanent sensation all through Europe, resulting in the rebirth of the Classic influence.

A man may apparently be a throw-back; he may greatly resemble the portrait of his great-grandfather, painted at about his own age; he may largely have the qualities that made his ancestor notable in his family, but—he will not be a duplicate of his great-grandfather. He will lack qualities of his forebear; others will have been added. For if heredity has its influence, so do the passage of time and the spirit of the age have theirs.

While, therefore, the Renaissance was a Classic movement, it was not that of Greece and Rome: while the very term Neo-Classic shows its inspiration, it also implies its modernity. It was neither the Classicism of the ancients nor of the Renaissance—it was the *new* Classicism of the late eighteenth century, and bore its characteristics. This was not a large and spacious age; it was one of luxury and, at least outward, refinement.

While in England, in France, and in Italy, this Classicism was the result of a fresh study of ancient work, either from the remains of ancient buildings or their pictorial reproductions, it was, in all three countries, a smaller, more attenuated version of the past.

By 1760 we already find in France what we know as the style of Louis XVI—fourteen years before the death of the predecessor of that monarch. As has been mentioned in the Chippendale chapter, by February, 1758, Robert Adam, returning from four years first-hand study of the classic remains of Central and Southern Europe, had opened his London office. He speedily became the most famous architect of his time, with an influence so great that these years are often, and justly, termed the Adam Period. The

?

classic architects, but Adam above all through both his architecture and furniture, may be said to have *formulated* classic contour and ornament for the cabinet-makers, and their enormous indebtedness to him is seen throughout their productions.

Yet no Adam furniture was made here. It was through Shearer, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton that American furniture became classic. The reason is obvious. All three of the widely known men issued books, and Shearer's designs were included in still another volume, but the "Works of Robert and James Adam" illustrated their architecture and contained no designs of what we term "household furniture." His own pieces were mostly elaborate and for palatial establishments. Even had our craftsmen had access to them, they would not have been apt to adopt such costly and ornamental types as models.

To be sure, his less elaborate furniture was imitated by others, but this was evidently either too late or had too little influence to penetrate to our shores before we were cut off by the Revolution. At its ending Hepplewhite's style was dominant in England and was adopted here.

Shearer was an excellent designer, and we shall see some of his work, but his reputation has been smothered by those of his more eminent compeers.

We do not know when George Hepplewhite entered business. He died in 1786 and the establishment was carried on by his widow Alice under the firm name of A. Hepplewhite & Co. "The Cabinet Maker's and Upholsterer's Guide" was published under those auspices in 1789. The plates are dated as being published in 1787, but whether this publication was general or merely formal would be difficult to determine.

There were but slight omissions and additions in

the second and third editions, the latter being published in 1794.

The preface to the first edition of that volume claims that its designs follow "the latest or most prevailing fashion only" and we do not know how closely the furniture previously made by this firm conformed to the designs shown in the book. The earliest date that we are aware of of Hepplewhite furniture being made here is about 1785.

Two of the early advertisements are of special interest as bearing on this point. The first is of January 8, 1785, in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, where among the articles advertised as being made and sold by Samuel Claphamson "late from London" and then of Philadelphia, are "oval and circular card-tables"; these forms indicating the style of Hepplewhite.

And the *Virginia Gazette and Petersburg Intelligencer*, for December 27, 1787, contains an advertisement of Henry Monroe, "in Petersburg Street opposite Mr. Barkdale's store," of a large and elegant assortment of mahogany furniture manufactured in Philadelphia, including circular and square card-tables, and comode chairs "all inlaid." Inlaying was not employed in America in the Chippendale period and this is an unmistakable reference to the new style. Furthermore, though there were excellent cabinet-makers in the South (we even know some of their names), this announcement proves that the Virginians still adhered to their practice of bringing considerable furniture from the northern port.

In towns occupied by the British, imported pieces of course found free ingress during the war. For instance, William Smith, on the Bay, Charleston, South Carolina, announces in the *Royal Gazette* in October, 1781, among goods received from London, "tea and

card tables, plain and beautifully inlaid" and "chairs of sattin and other woods."

The new mode seems to have soon become popular, but most of this furniture, especially the more important pieces, was likely made after the publication of the "Guide," that is to say, from about 1790 onward, after our craftsmen would have had an opportunity of obtaining this volume.

There is no evidence or likelihood that Thomas Sheraton ever made furniture either in his native town of Stockton-on-Tees or after he came to London as a journeyman in 1790—he was never a master cabinet-maker. He died in destitution in 1806, yet he was one of the greatest designers of furniture that England has produced.

It is not probable that every design in his "Drawing-Book" was original, and indeed there are evidences to the contrary, and it is plain that he was very free in helping himself to the ideas of Adam, Hepplewhite, and the French designers. But even to his borrowings he gave the mark of his own individuality. It is possible that some pieces in what we know as the "Sheraton *style*" appeared here even before his advent in the furniture world; but so far as definitely Sheraton work is concerned the following facts must be remembered. The usual date given for the publication of the "Drawing-Book" is 1791, but this book was issued in parts, and it was not till Part III that he arrived at plates of designs for furniture. The first of these plates is dated as published November 18, 1791, but almost all the remaining ones are dated 1792 and 1793, so that the part containing these designs was evidently not issued till the latter year. There was an Appendix containing some very fine things, and the plates in this are dated as published in 1793 and 1794. The last

edition of the book was issued in 1802 but contains no plates dated later than 1794.

"Sheraton" furniture was made not by him but by others. He was an unknown man when he published his book, and the designs shown therein had to win recognition and adoption by cabinet-makers in England and become known in America. While we must be very hesitant in dealing with doubtful matters, I cannot help but feel that strictly Sheraton American furniture, and especially that plainly based upon his book, should not be dated before 1794 or 1795.

THE CHANGES MADE IN THE NEW STYLES

It is well to be prepared in advance for the great changes that we shall find, so as to know for what to look, in our American as well as in English furniture.

We are so accustomed to seeing the Chippendale and Classic styles, and frequently in the same room, that the extent of their differences is hardly realised by the general observer. If the reader—as an *apéritif*—will occupy a few minutes in a general comparison of the Chippendale illustrations with those in this chapter he will then see in contrast what amounts to virtually two conceptions of furniture design.

Chippendale furniture is robust and big, and the curves of its ornament are free and flowing: *this* furniture is light and slender and its outline is severe—yet it possesses the greatest charm and refinement. The corners of Chippendale cabinet-pieces were softened by such means as chamfers, rounding and carving, and columns; here they are angular and sharp. The surfaces of Chippendale pieces were often relieved by ornate carving; now surfaces are flat and the ornament employed is inlay or painting. Veneering with beautifully grained woods was extensively practiced.

Much of the curvilinear element was retained by Hepplewhite but largely discarded by Sheraton—his work is almost wholly rectangular. In both styles the bold mouldings of Chippendale have now been abandoned or reduced to delicacy in scale. That magnificent borrower and exquisite draftsman, that Baptist preacher from Stockton-on-Tees who in deftness and refinement designed more like a Frenchman than any other man born on English soil, Thomas Sheraton, was a master of scale, and in this respect carried English furniture to a perfection it had never known before.

In this period the woods employed were of generally lighter colour than formerly, the mahogany often being finished naturally with little or no use of permanganate of potash. Satinwood, ebony, rosewood, birch, and maple were used for inlays and veneers. The decorative *motifs* were, of course, classic and generally derived from architecture. Handles were of appropriate delicacy.

We have seen that the ornate phase of Chippendale developed in Philadelphia was not taken up elsewhere, but though the Pennsylvania neighborhood still retained all its ability, its craftsmen of the present period were now equalled by many of those in New England, New York and the South. The new styles were adopted throughout the country and their chaste beauty and restraint in ornament seem especially to have appealed to the New England temperament and admirably to have satisfied its ideals in furniture.

This section of our country had now increased in wealth, some of its ship-owners living in almost princely style. Furthermore, with the influx of new arrivals and the growth of new generations under urbane con-

ditions, a more liberal spirit prevailed and beauty in the home met its due recognition.

It may be a relief to the reader if he is assured that he need feel under no obligation of being able definitely to term every piece of the American furniture of this period either Hepplewhite or Sheraton; in England the styles overlapped quite sufficiently, for these men and others were all working in the Neo-classic manner, while our American craftsman added his own individuality, made choice of his own ingredients, and often used them as he pleased.

THE FURNITURE

CHAIRS

Although a few complications exist even here, chairs are much freer from them than is cabinet-furniture.

HEPPLEWHITE CHAIRS

The shield-back and interlaced-heart chairs (Plates 47 B - 51) are of course Hepplewhite—they are so characteristic that they are as easily recognised as the Chippendale chair. Sheraton also gave two designs for shield-backs (one of them appears in Plate 68 A) but the top-rails were flattened: as they do not seem to have been made in America they need give us no concern.

Before the typical examples, came those that were a transition from the Chippendale style to this, and which preserved the earlier back uprights, or stiles, while adopting the serpentine top-rail and Hepplewhite ornament—Plate 47 A. The back of the chair illustrated is full of charming Hepplewhite details and the tapered legs are of this style. The wheat-ear is a very

frequent ornament at the top of these chairs and it also appears in the next example, which is in the full Hepplewhite mode.

Another early chair is the hoop-back; often with a depression in the hoop at the centre, or two depressions—one at each side of the centre.

These early chairs are in England credited to the Hepplewhite school, but whether George Hepplewhite had any hand in them we do not know.

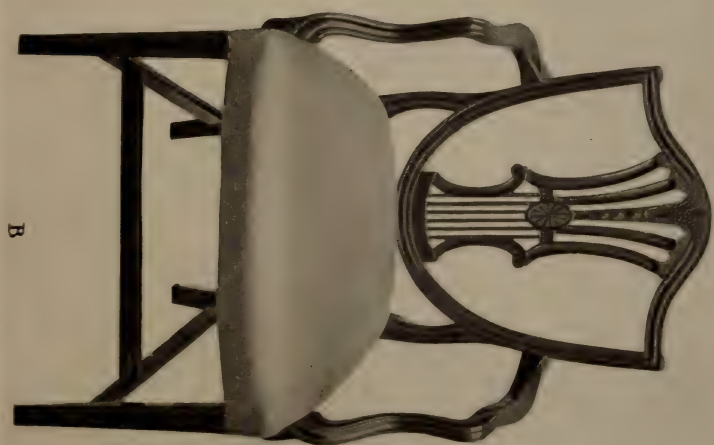
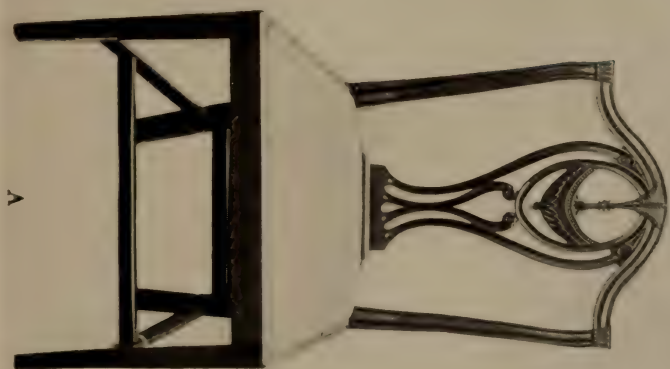
The upholstered shield-back was a Louis XVI mode, but Hepplewhite took it over, filled the back with a variety of fine designs, and made the type his own. The three feathers of the Prince of Wales was one of his favourite *motifs*. In Plate 49 A this device is, unusually, rendered in palm leaves.

The Hepplewhite chair is of great refinement and beauty. There is inherent weakness in its construction of back, but the formal social life of England did not expose it to great risk of breakage: here these backs were sometimes made heavier. In any case numbers of them have survived a century and a third of usage.

The securing of the arm-supports at the sides (as in Plates 47 B and 49 B) was a favourite method with Hepplewhite, but he did not confine himself to it and two other treatments are shown in Plates 51 B and 52.

The variety in the forms of seats should also be noted. The covering of the seat-rail was most usual but the drop-in seat also occurred. The serpentine form of the bottom of the seat-rail, sometimes seen, was derived from Adam.

Hepplewhite's "Guide" illustrates the use of a number of leg designs but that which most often appears in American work is the square, tapered leg, plain or waved, with or without spade feet, and with or without stretchers. Those with stretchers are

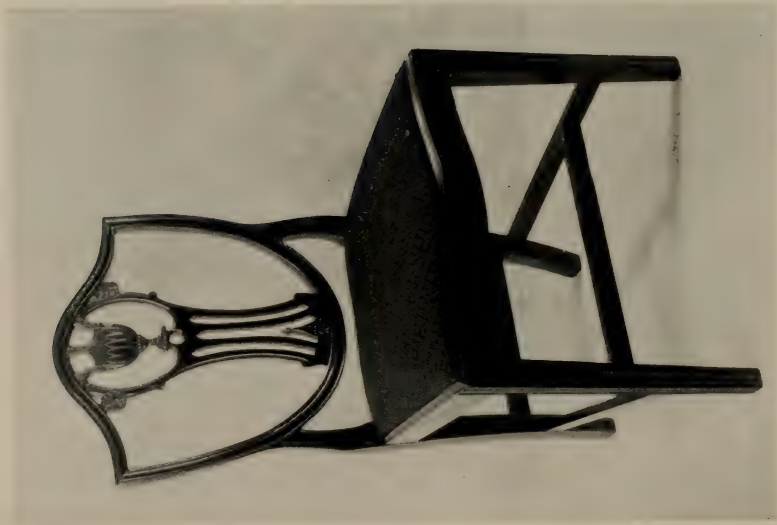


Transition from Chippendale

HEPPLEWHITE CHAIRS

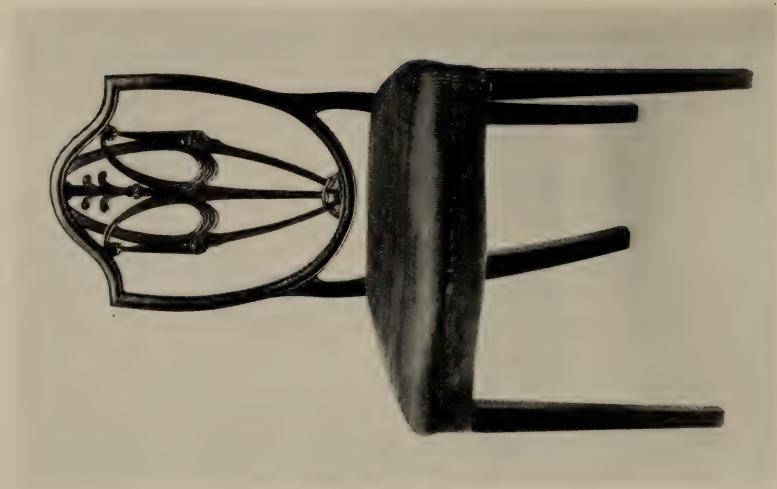
By Courtesy of Charles Wooley Lyon, Inc., New York City

Shield-back Arm Chair



A

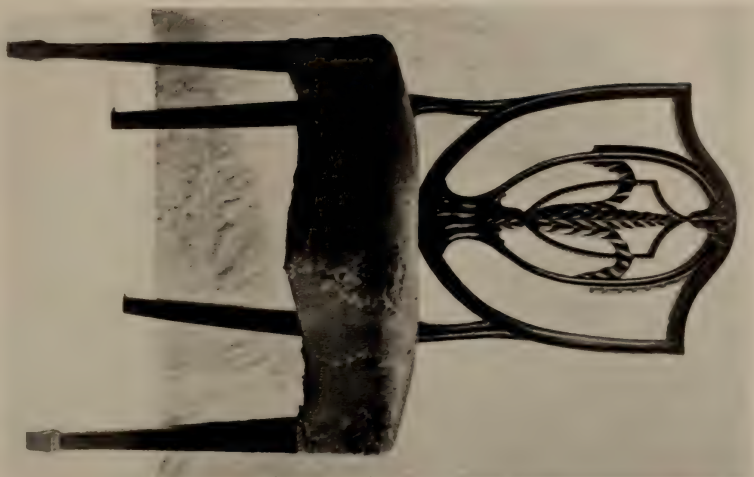
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq
Photograph by Dillon



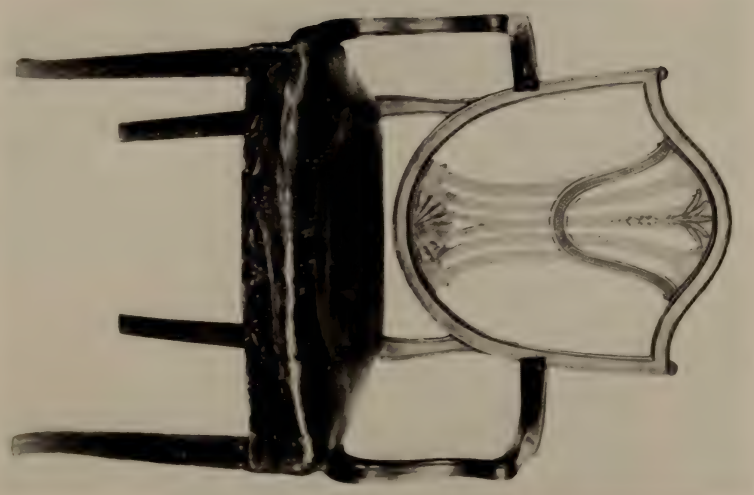
B

HEPPLEWHITE SHIELD-BACK SIDE CHAIRS

Gift of Mrs. Charles Wolcott Henry to
The Pennsylvania Museum



A. The Three Feathers Composed of Palm-Leaves



B. Arm Chair with French Splay-Foot

HIPPLEWHITE SIDE AND ARM CHAIR

By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York City



A. HEPPLEWHITE CHAIR WITH CORNUCOPIA BALUSTERS
By Courtesy Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc.



B. AN ATTRACTIVE BACK-DESIGN



A. HEPPLEWHITE INTERLACED-HEART SIDE CHAIRS



B. HEPPLEWHITE DECORATED CHAIRS WITH MAHOGANY ARMS

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.
Photographs by Dillon

PLATE 52

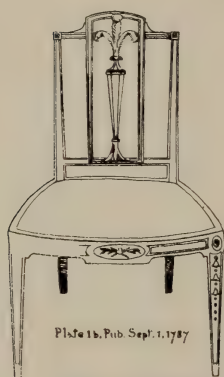


Plate 1b, Pub. Sept. 1, 1787

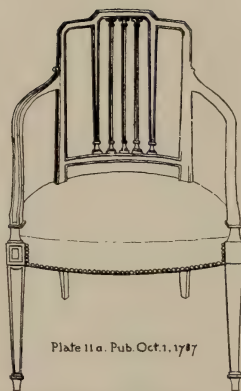
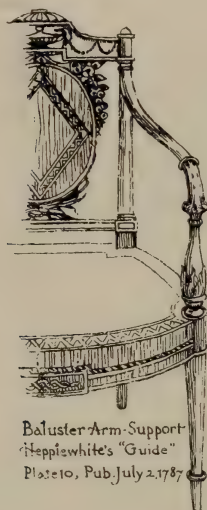


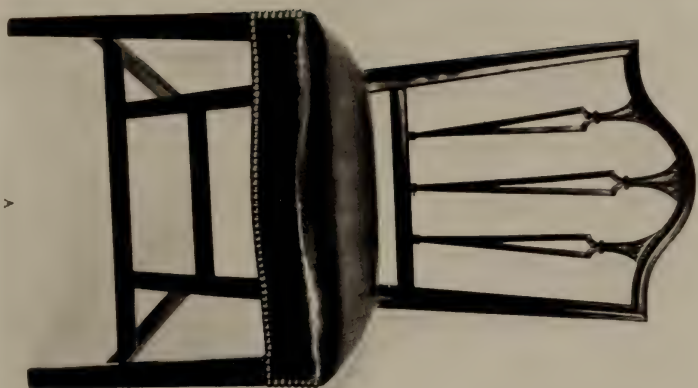
Plate 11a, Pub. Oct. 1, 1787

Square-back, Baluster Chairs from Hepplewhite's "Guide"



Baluster Arm-Support
Hepplewhite's "Guide"

Plate 10, Pub. July 2, 1787



A

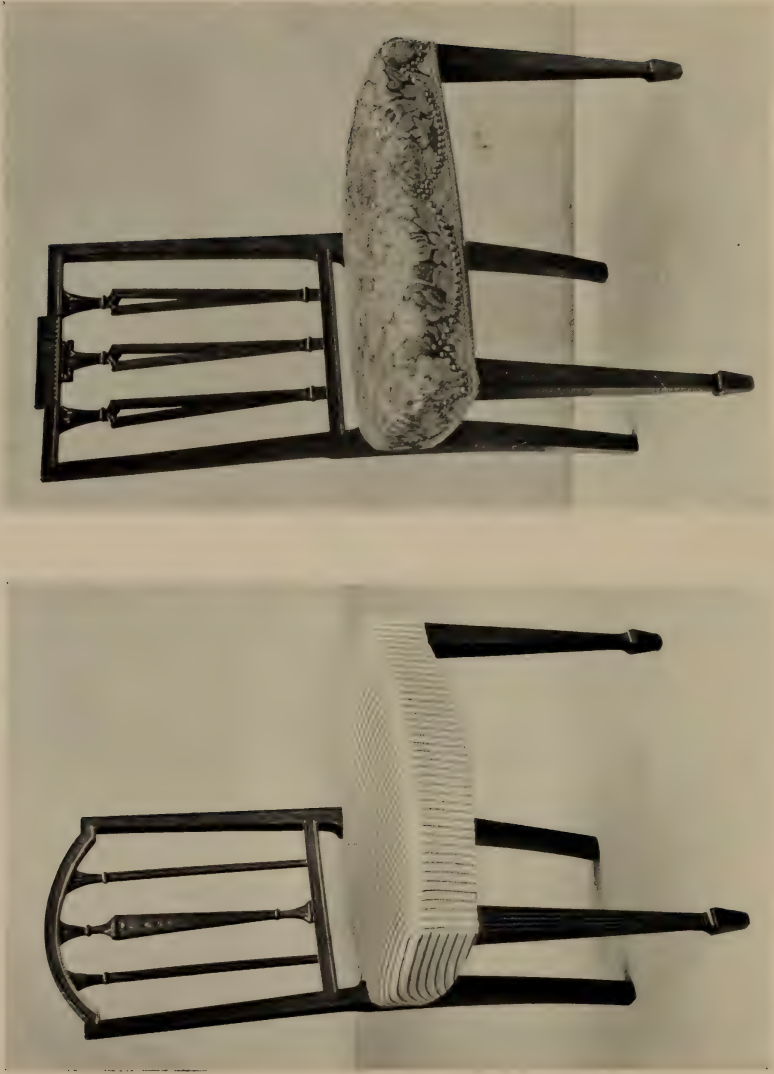


B

SHERATON CHAIRS WITH STRETCHERS

Lent by Mrs. J. Woolston to
The Pennsylvania Museum

Lent by Mrs. Arthur Biddle to
The Pennsylvania Museum



A

B

SHERATON SIDE CHAIRS OF CHASTE DESIGN
Loaned by R. T. Haines Halsey, Esq., to the Metropolitan Museum

usually considered the earlier in England, but their use probably depended greatly upon their appropriateness to the general contour and weight of the chair.

One chair with the French splayed foot is shown in Plate 49 B. The Hepplewhite firm made much furniture in what they frankly called "The French taste" but the phase was not adopted in America.

Two of the most charming of the back-designs are those in Plate 50. In A each baluster is a cornucopia. That of B would appear to be an American design, as I have never seen it in an English chair. However—one who has closely observed furniture for a number of years may write that he has never seen a certain feature under certain conditions and, as soon as that statement gets into print, may encounter the very thing!

Plate 51 B illustrates a pair of painted chairs in which the original decoration of blue forget-me-nots on an old ivory ground has carefully been restored. The arms are of mahogany. According to a certificate or declaration signed by the Rev. George W. MacLaughlin, these chairs were presented to him in 1864 by Colonel Jones, a nephew of Mr. Chew, at the time Mr. MacLaughlin was pastor of the Haines Street M. E. Church, Germantown, the certificate stating that they occupied positions in the reception-room or parlour of the famous Chew House, Cliveden, Germantown, Philadelphia.

SHERATON CHAIRS

The two outstanding characteristics of all Sheraton furniture are its slenderness and the avoiding of the curve in favour of the straight line. His chairs have, therefore, the rectangular, or as they are often called, the "square" back.

It so happens that Hepplewhite in his "Guide" had given a number of designs for square-back chairs, and we know from Sheraton's slurring reference in his own preface that he was familiar with them. So far as I am aware but two of Hepplewhite's were made, and tracings from the "Guide" are given in Plate 52. If the reader will compare the first of these with the first design in Plate 68 A he will see how free was Sheraton in helping himself to the ideas of Hepplewhite. Furthermore, in Plate 52 C is also given a tracing of a vase-shaped arm-support. This is the only example of it given by Hepplewhite, and, whether or no it suggested the form to Sheraton, the fact remains that in one phase or another it is Sheraton's favourite treatment in arm-chairs and sofas. It will be seen in the tracing of a sofa from his own book in Plate 57 B and in all the Sheraton American sofas illustrated here.

Stretchers were not very usual in English Sheraton chairs of this type but frequently appeared in American examples: indeed the whole lower portions of the two chairs in Plate 53 are distinctly Hepplewhite. Fig. B in this plate was presented to the great-grandfather of the present owner by General Washington, and Mr. Halsey tells us that a set similar to Plate 54 B was a part of the library furnishings of the Cherry Street house Washington used as the first Presidential mansion in New York. As a number of exactly the same pattern have been found in old houses in that city, all are probably of New York origin.

Most of the American Sheraton chairs are in these simple, chaste designs; but a very ornamental back is seen in Plate 55. This chair is in the possession of a descendant of a well-known old New York family and so, too, was almost surely made there.

The design of chair-back shown in Plate 54 A does not appear in Sheraton's book but the whole piece is a virtual duplicate of some original English Sheraton chairs: thus showing that in this period also our craftsmen sometimes worked from imported pieces, drawings or templets. On the other hand Plate 53 B and the chair in Plate 79 are respectively very close and direct renderings of Sheraton's design No. 1 in Plate 68 A.

Sheraton's favourite back-treatment was the straight baluster seen in all these chairs and the diagonal form appearing in the chair from the Cadwalader house, Philadelphia, and made in that city, appearing in Plate 93. Sometimes they were combined, the diagonal of the upper portion joining perpendicular balusters below.

Notwithstanding all his "borrowings," there is a certain *quality* in Sheraton's typical design that is difficult to describe in language but that will be felt by one appreciative of loveliness in proportion and form: this quality is inherent in most of his chair backs. I regret that the number of illustrations for which I must find room forbids my showing all his plates. It is a deprivation to American furniture that our craftsmen rendered so few of these designs.

A ladder-back of these classic years is shown in Plate 56. This influence is evident in its slenderness and refinement of detail.

SOFAS

In this period, too, both multiple chair-back settees, immediately recognisable by the style of back, and upholstered sofas were made. Of the latter, two typical examples of Hepplewhite's have been traced from the "Guide" and are reproduced in Plate 57 A.

Good American examples of the Hepplewhite sofa are decidedly scarce: Sheraton's style followed closely upon Hepplewhite's and displaced it, so that, except for chairs, we find less furniture of the earlier than of the later style.

Plate 58 shows how our craftsmen both followed and departed from originals. Plate 57 A gives two of Hepplewhite's own designs and it will be seen how here the characteristics of the two have been united. But the high roll of the arms is that of the type familiar through the Chippendale period and persisting in Hepplewhite years both in England and America—Plate 23 B. The drooping arm typified in Hepplewhite's Plate 24 (the lower tracing) was definitely however one of his phases. In some entirely upholstered pieces with rounded back the arms curve immediately and gracefully downward. The well-known Hepplewhite sofa in the Brooklyn Museum, in which the wood of the arms appears, has the droop in double concaves. The husk ornaments the front of its tapered square legs.

The fine example illustrated here (Plate 58) has a delightful back-ornament of a basket of flowers upon a stippled ground, with rosettes and waterleaf sprays upon the arms. Qualities of the workmanship will be referred to in connexion with the Sheraton sofa illustrated in Plate 60 made by the same cabinet-maker, who is believed to have come from Salem, Massachusetts.

A typical Sheraton design, traced from his "Drawing-Book," is the lowest figure on Plate 57. Of these sofas Sheraton says: "If the top rail be thought to have too much work, it can be finished in a straight rail, as the design shows." Most of our American craftsmen took Sheraton's hint, but some one or more of those in Salem, Massachusetts, not only followed the original form in this period, as in Plate 60, but



AN ORNATE SHERATON CHAIR-BACK

Chair probably made in New York

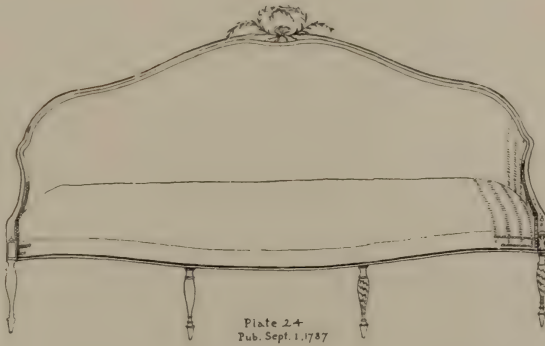
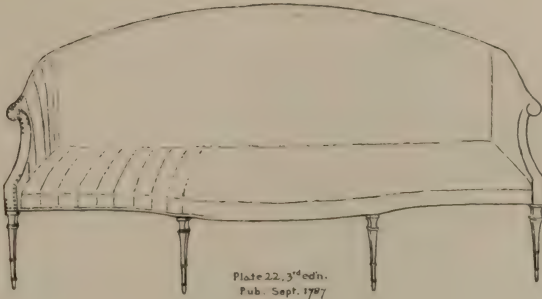
Photograph by Courtesy of A. F. C. Bateman Co., Philadelphia

PLATE 56

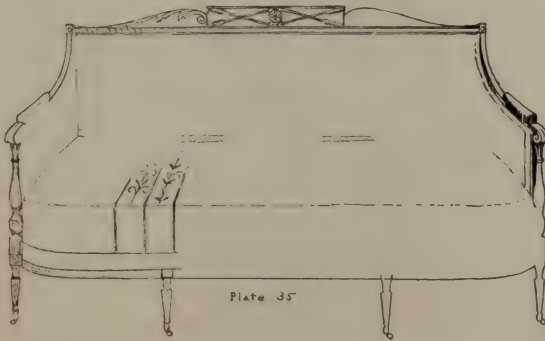


LADDER-BACK CHAIR OF THE CLASSIC PERIOD

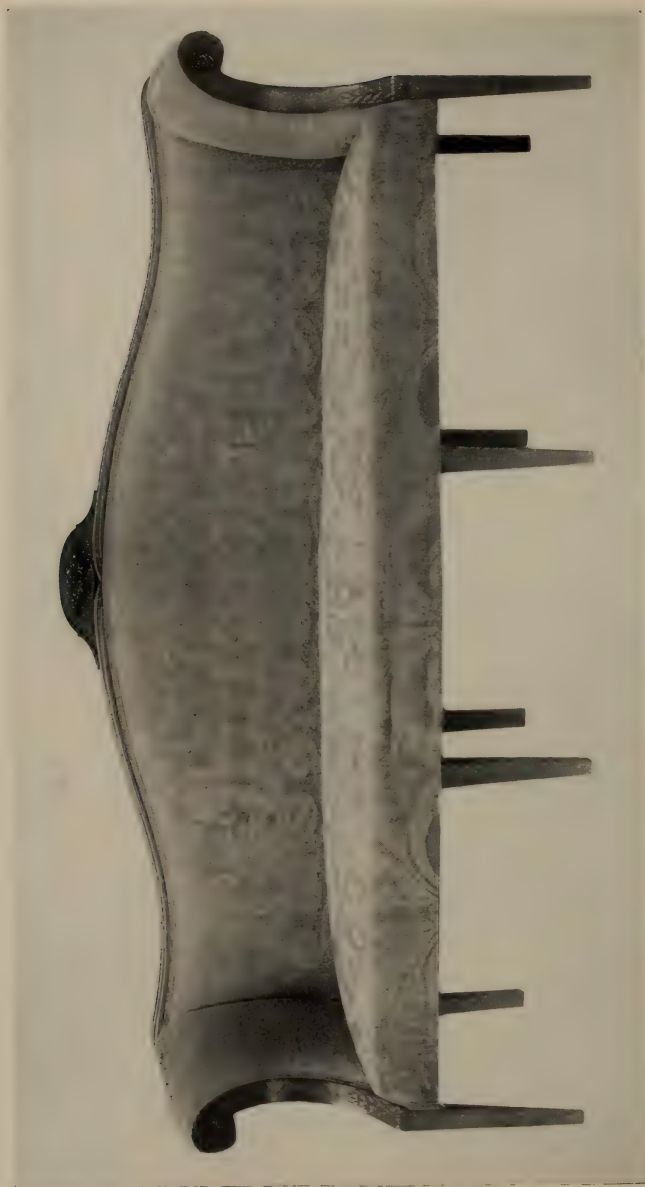
PLATE 57



A. TWO SOFA DESIGNS FROM HEPPLEWHITE'S "GUIDE"



B. SOFA DESIGN FROM SHERATON'S "DRAWING-BOOK"



Photograph by Burdett Woolford

AMERICAN HEPPLEWHITE SOFA SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN MADE IN SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

By Courtesy of George Alfred Cluett, Esq.

Photograph by Dillon

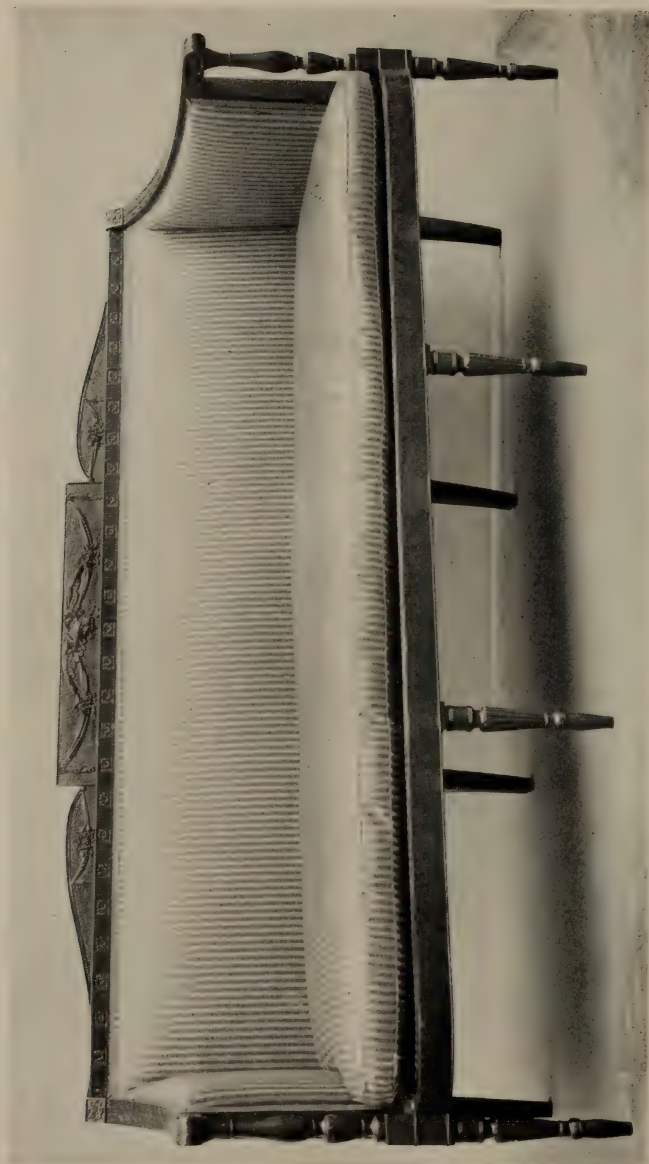


SHERATON SOFA BY DUNCAN PHYFE, NEW YORK

By Courtesy of Howard Reitsnyder, Esq., Philadelphia

Note the characteristic Phyfe ornament of back-rail

PLATE 60



SHERATON SOFA SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN MADE IN SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

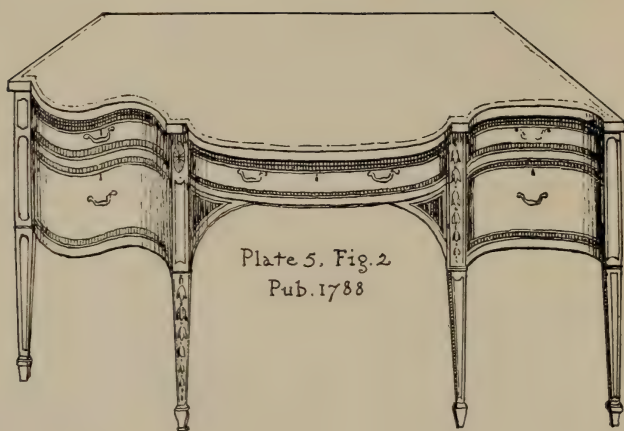
By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City

Note the close following of Sheraton's design in Plate 57B



SHERATON INLAID MAHOGANY AND SATINWOOD SOFA WITH PERSISTING CAMEL-BACK. C. 1800
Loaned to The Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia, by Miss Margaretta S. Hinchman

PLATE 62



TWO DESIGNS FOR SIDEBOARDS BY SHEARER
From "The Cabinet Maker's London Book of Prices," 1788
Note alternative contours for the sides in the upper plate and the four decorative treatments of legs

carried it into the Empire style as in Plate 123. The first of these displays in its back-design the American eagle, so frequently appearing in our furniture from now onward.

This sofa—a rather recent acquisition of the Metropolitan Museum—is believed to be the work of the same man as the Hepplewhite sofa previously mentioned; the characteristics of clean, sharp carving and stippled background prevailing in both. The frieze of the back in this Sheraton sofa is the alternate fluting and rosette *motif* extensively used by Samuel McIntire, the Salem architect, in his following of the Adam style, of which he was a leading exponent. It is a common “property” of that style—see the lower moulding of the entablature of the Adam mantel in Plate 133. The Hepplewhite firm in England freely employed it as the frieze of numbers of their cabinet-pieces, most of which till quite late in their career were thoroughly Adamesque in detail.

Duncan Phyfe of New York in his earlier manner was one of the principal exponents of the Sheraton style. We shall see more of his work in the *Directoire* chapter, but the sofa in Plate 59 is a very fine example. The three-panelled back-rail was one of Phyfe’s original and favourite treatments and extended into his *Directoire* derivations. The carved ornaments of this rail will be treated in connexion with these. Phyfe sometimes turned the outer ends of the arms of Sheraton sofas *inward*.

English furniture is full of survivals from previous periods, and American is “more so.” The camel-back of both Chippendale and Hepplewhite is still seen in the Sheraton sofa in Plate 61. In all these examples the round fluted leg and the vase arm-support are employed. It will be noted that the back in Plate 61

is entirely upholstered, no wood showing above the base save the arms. Rounded backs occur and they are treated in the same manner.

Caning was also used in this period.

SIDEBOARDS

The case of sideboards is very different from that of seating-furniture—even the attributions of well-known writers sometimes vary, and it will soon be seen that they may easily do so.

The naming of furniture styles after individuals, which began with Chippendale, has not proved an unmixed blessing. The overlapping of the schools of Hepplewhite and Sheraton, particularly in America, where our craftsmen sometimes combined the contours or *motifs* of two or more designers, makes it practically impossible to assign some furniture with certainty; and it is for that reason that here they are considered together. There is much in favour of calling it all Neo-Classic and being done with complications, and yet our sense of fairness bids us give honour where honour is due. Furthermore, it is almost impossible to change an existing custom. The sensible course seems to be to give credit when we can, and follow the alternative when we must.

By the law of compensation, a very happy result of these complications is that in attempting to learn to differentiate the styles one gathers far more information about the furniture of this whole period than he would be likely to accumulate in any other way: for real observation and comparison are the two essentials in the study of any furniture.

It will be as entertaining to the reader as a cross-word puzzle to take up this matter as if, of his own

accord, he were trying to elucidate these differences as regards our American pieces.

He may possibly hear this "easy rule."

1. "The square, tapered leg, especially with the spade foot, is Hepplewhite."

2. "The round, fluted leg is Sheraton."

3. "If cabinet-furniture is inlaid it is Hepplewhite: Sheraton pieces are usually mahogany without inlay."

We shall presently examine these dicta. But I may here give a word of warning: if one accepts and applies them and then takes a trip to London—the home of these styles, be it remembered—and, visiting there the shops of the leading dealers, calls certain pieces of furniture Hepplewhite, he may be surprised to be greeted with the remark: "But, my dear sir, that is *Sheraton*, don't you know!" He may experience the same surprise if he studies the books of English authorities on the subject.

Among sideboards—and other corresponding furniture—there is one type at least that causes no difficulty and that may at once be eliminated from discussion. In England and in America the style shown in Plates 70 and 71, in which the leg stands out beyond the body of the piece—the architectural "engaged column" transferred to furniture—is unfailingly Sheraton. And the lion-head dropped-ring handle is also his. The dropped-ring with ornamental centre-piece seen in these two examples is earlier, but is *usually* in America confined to Sheraton furniture.

First of all, one investigating the subject would be likely to feel that the books of Hepplewhite and Sheraton should be consulted, and that there he would find authoritative information. I have already given some hints as to their incompleteness as a satisfactory exposition of the *actual styles of the respective schools*,

but let us see what they will do for our enlightenment. As these books, even in their reprints, are somewhat costly and not easily come by, and as only the leading libraries have them, where they are held as works of reference, I have afforded the reader some help by making tracings of the illustrations that principally interest us here.

CONTOUR

A number of designs by Thomas Shearer appear in "The Cabinet-Makers London Book of Prices," published in 1788. These show much ability, and his name, so long overwhelmed by greater reputations, should be more publicly recognised. He gives five designs for sideboards, and I have traced the two which more especially concern us—Plate 62. The other three are a plain bow-front, a semi-circular, and a bow-front with pedestals, for urns, attached.

To Shearer is given the credit of introducing the sideboard current at the period we are considering, because of the publication of the book containing the designs in 1788 while Hepplewhite's "Guide" was not issued till the following year. But on the two Hepplewhite plates, also traced in Plate 64, are engraved the publication dates 1787. As I have mentioned, we do not know whether this publication was merely formal or otherwise; but as Hepplewhite—or his widow—says in the text that: "The great utility of this piece of furniture has procured it a very general reception," he would appear to have made such sideboards anterior to the publication of the book.

However this may be, it will at once be evident, by comparison, that the type of sideboard illustrated here by Mr. Reifsnyder's very fine example in Plate 63 and which is universally called "Hepplewhite" is, so



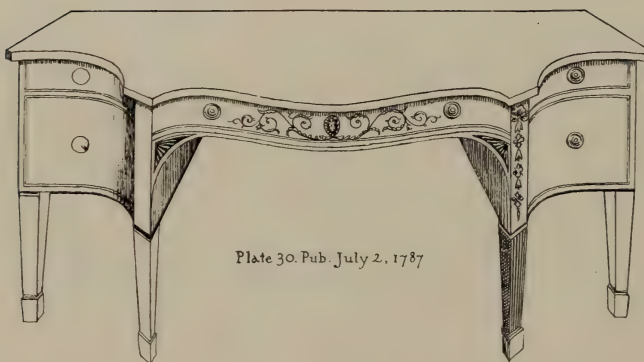
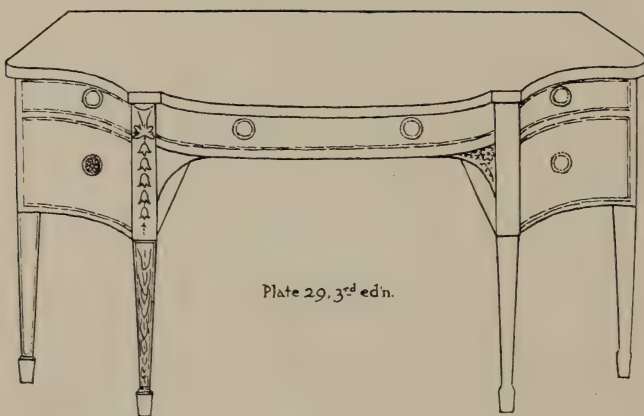
Photograph by Dillon

HEPPLEWHITE SIDEBOARD IN INLAID MAHOGANY, WITH SATINWOOD URNS

Made in the Philadelphia Neighbourhood

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.

PLATE 64



TWO DESIGNS FOR SIDEBOARDS FROM HEPPLEWHITE'S "GUIDE"



FINE OLD SHERATON MAHOGANY INLAID SERPENTINE SIDEBOARD, 6 FT. 6 IN. LONG.

A. By Courtesy of M. Harris & Sons, New Oxford Street, London



Genuine Inlaid Antique Sheraton Serpentine Sideboard, in original condition; and numerous others in stock.

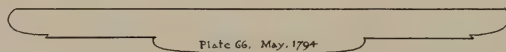
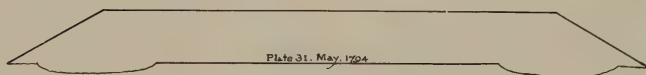
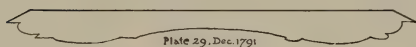
B. By Courtesy of C. Angell, Bath, England

ENGLISH INLAID SERPENTINE SIDEBOARDS AND THEIR ATTRIBUTIONS

PLATE 66



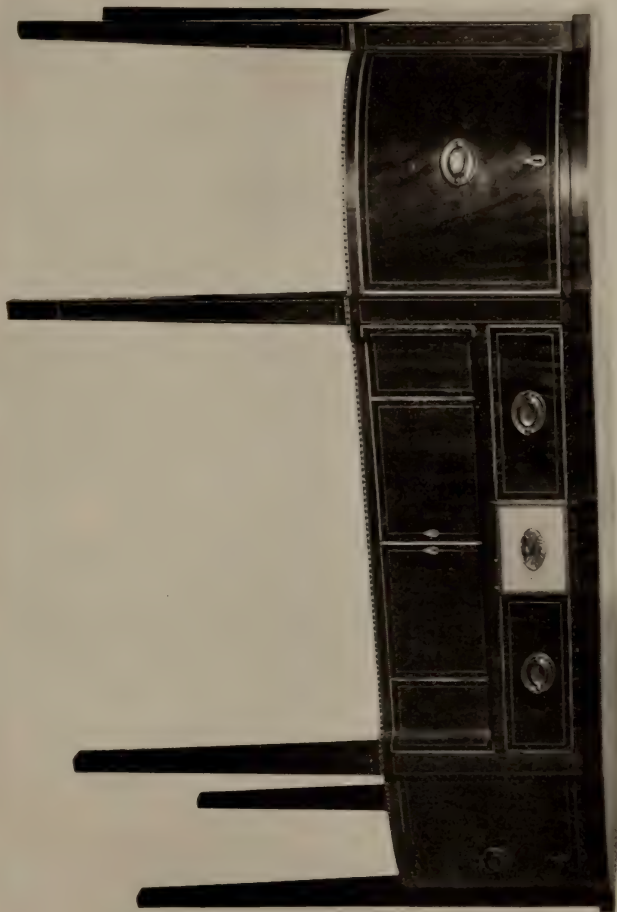
A. A DESIGN FOR A SIDEBOARD, BY SHERATON



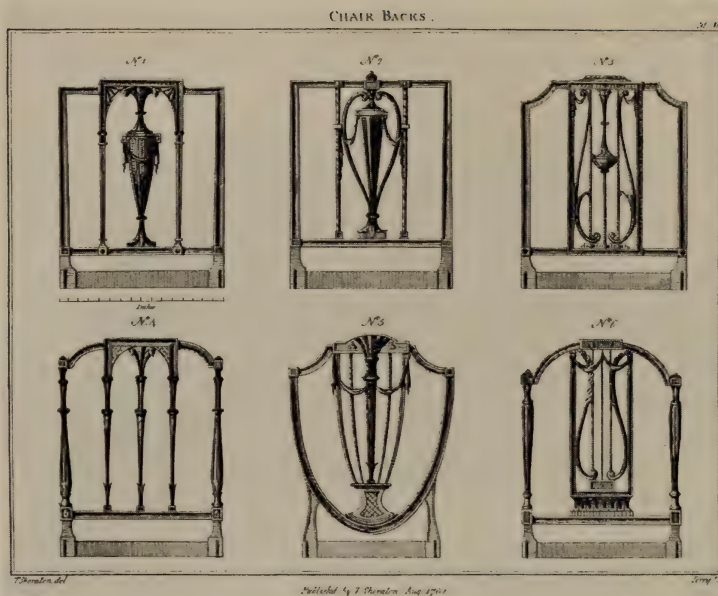
B. PERSPECTIVE CONTOURS OF SIDEBOARD TOPS

ALL FROM SHERATON'S "DRAWING-BOOK"

Photograph by Dillon



SHERATON INLAID MAHOGANY SIDEBOARD
By Courtesy of Howard Reissnyder, Esq., Philadelphia



A. SHERATON CHAIR-BACKS. PLATE 36 OF HIS "DRAWING-BOOK"

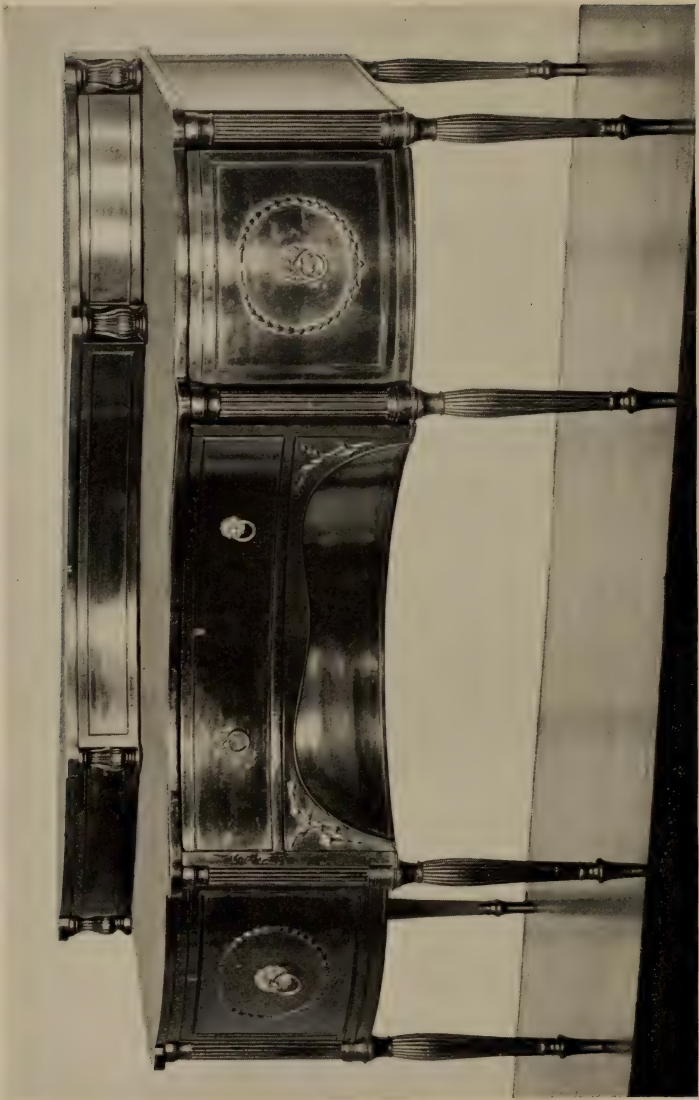


Old Sheraton satinwood Side Table, 4 ft. 4 in. wide.

B. AN ENGLISH RENDERING OF PLATE 4 OF SHERATON'S APPENDIX
By Courtesy of W. F. Greenwood & Sons, Ltd., York and Harrogate



SHERATON SIDEBOARD OR LARGE PIER-TABLE, IN LIGHT MAHOGANY, INLAID
AN AMERICAN RENDERING OF PLATE 4 OF THE APPENDIX TO SHERATON'S "DRAWING-BOOK"
By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York City



NEW ENGLAND SHERATON SIDEBOARD WITH THE CHARACTERISTIC EXTENDED LEGS
By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend

far as the books go, of the first Shearer model, in that the top is in front an unbroken serpentine line. Furthermore, it, like Shearer's design, is lighter than the Hepplewhite. Nevertheless it is credited to Hepplewhite and I think that this very beautiful type with little ornament would be called Hepplewhite in England as well as here; but the serpentine sideboard seems to have afforded "a free race for all." One of the Shearer tracings shows the form unbroken; one of Hepplewhite's gives it with straight spaces above the legs; Sheraton does not show it at all, but this contour constantly appears in existing Sheraton sideboards. Those of the type of the English examples in Plate 65 are in that country universally considered as Sheraton. I could illustrate numerous advertisements of most experienced, widely known English dealers where, without exception, they are so denominated, but these two, with their own attributions reproduced beneath, will suffice as examples. Furthermore, Mr. Herbert Ceszinsky, the foremost living authority on English furniture, illustrates the same type in his section on Thomas Sheraton in Volume III of his "English Furniture of the Eighteenth Century." On the other hand in America these sideboards are frequently credited to Hepplewhite.

As this is probably done because they are inlaid (as per the so-called "rule,") let us investigate inlay.

INLAY

Sheraton in a large proportion of his designs used elaborate ornament: but the English cabinet-maker in actually rendering them frequently simplified—as did our own men. The type of inlay then used is seen in the two English sideboards illustrated and consisted mainly of a line, or "string," inlay with fan or other

paterae, triangular fans, shells, and the like. It appears in much English furniture of unmistakable Sheraton style, such as secretary-bookcases, desks, and particularly in small tables. The same general type appeared in Hepplewhite furniture as well, for *it was a common property of the period and was employed in both styles and in both countries.*

I will at once instance a case in which the exclusive identification of inlay with the Hepplewhite mode would lead us distinctly astray. Plate 69 shows us an extremely graceful type of sideboard, or large pier-table—and it has this type of inlay. If the “rule” were followed the piece would be called Hepplewhite. What is it? It is a rendering of Plate 4 of the Appendix in Sheraton’s “Drawing-Book”—a pier-table of the same design, but with an urn and pendants upon the centre of the stretcher and very ornamental round legs. It is indeed a very ornamental piece throughout—but it was simplified in the making in England in at least one instance and that instance is illustrated in Plate 68 B here. Compare it with this sideboard Mr. Lyon has so kindly allowed me to show—Plate 69. The type of inlay is the same, though the pattern is different, and it is pleasing to be able to say in this case the American example is superior.

Now what shall we call this sideboard? It is absolutely Sheraton, yet has the type of inlay sometimes identified in *America* with Hepplewhite. In talking over existing confusions one day with Mr. Eberlein he laughingly suggested that we should call them “Sherawhite.” As Sheraton adopted this type of stretcher from Adam, I might, in the same spirit, go Mr. Eberlein “one better” and denominate this sideboard as “Sherawhiteadam.” Seriously, however, can we allow a but partially adopted practice to over-

rule an unmistakably correct nomenclature? And if this is done how are we rendering honour where honour is due? We must call this sideboard Sheraton.

And this holds good of every piece of furniture of the contour of the Sheraton sideboard traced in Plate 66 A—the straight-front with convexly rounded corners and straight ends. Though Sheraton borrowed many other things, *this* contour (like the extended legs) is Sheraton's own. It appears in numerous designs in his book exclusively. Indeed the convex is his favourite curve, as is shown in the three tracings below this sideboard.

Another example of this contour is given in Plate 67, and the treatment of this piece in general is also Sheraton.

It should be added that the saying in America regarding inlay has become rather current probably as a rough-and-ready "help," but it is so faulty as to be positively misleading and its use should not be extended. Two of the Sheraton sideboards illustrated here (Plates 70 and 71) and some case-pieces, are without inlay, but they are in the minority. Sheraton explained that hollowing the front of sideboards made it more convenient for a butler to reach across them: this feature will be found in both these examples.

LEGS

That the round, fluted leg is in American furniture indicative of the style of Sheraton is *almost* invariably true. I, however, know of a set of twelve shield-back chairs, with serpentine front, curved sides, and hollowed seat—every one of these features shouting of Hepplewhite—and they have round, fluted legs. In English furniture the round leg is so promiscuously used as to be non-committal.

The square leg, and especially with spade foot, is in seating-furniture and tables most commonly allied with Hepplewhite. But here, already, we have an exception—do not both the unmistakably Sheraton and American chairs in Plate 54 have square legs and spade feet? And outside of seating-furniture and tables it is no criterion whatever.

The simple fact is that, in the various legged pieces of furniture, Adam, Shearer, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton display about every form of straight leg that could be imagined, and that round and square were almost indiscriminately used. In Sheraton English furniture I should think there is very little numerical excess of one over the other. He uses the square leg in the sideboard design in Plate 66 A: with the other contours, Plate 66 B, the first and the last have round legs and the central example square. The four are therefore equally divided. We shall soon see the degrees of employment in American case-pieces.

HANDLES AND DECORATIVE MOTIFS

It is really amusing to note how little in some respects the furniture-books of Hepplewhite and Sheraton can be relied upon as adequate guides. In practice, in America the oval form of handle is most commonly associated with Hepplewhite: yet in his book he employs the ring handle (not dropped) almost exclusively, the one exception being the bail. In running over Sheraton's "Drawing-Book" I note one oval and two or three with a semi-circular drop: all the rest are ring. Yet in English practice the various types were almost indiscriminately applied.

As to ornament. If possession be nine-tenths of the law, then certainly, *from the books*, the ellipse and the shell would belong to Sheraton. Hepplewhite

quite frequently shows the ellipse and in the furniture it is equally present, but in both the Sheraton book and in practice it is overwhelmingly evident. There is but one shell in the whole of Hepplewhite's "Guide"—an inlay on the top of a little dressing-table mirror: but in the furniture, and especially American furniture, it quite often occurs.

The husk (derived from Adam) should almost as convincingly belong to Hepplewhite—it will be seen on both his sideboard designs—but on furniture it, too, is rather promiscuously apparent.

We now arrive at the truth that *many if not most of the contours, decorative motifs, and details belong to Neo-Classic design as a whole, and that the various designers and their numerous followers, working under that impulse, used them upon occasion without much regard to whether others employed them also. Each might have and did have his own general preferences and usages without feeling compelled to confine himself to them if the spirit moved him otherwise.*

TABLES AND DRESSING-TABLES

Our way is now smoothed for the consideration of other furniture with the same characteristics—and very beautiful furniture it is.

Plate 72 A shows a transition Pembroke table still largely Chippendale. Grooved or waved legs were, however, more common in Hepplewhite pieces than in Chippendale, and the block feet here begin to take on the spade form. The insides of these legs are cut out so that they are generally triangular. There is a duplicate of this piece in Independence Hall.

The next three examples are Hepplewhite card-

tables. Plate 74 with the inlaid griffin was almost certainly made in the South.

The Hepplewhite side-table with serpentine front (Plate 75) is a particularly charming example, in which, as in similar sideboards, the legs are not square but follow the curve of the front.

Plate 76 gives two Sheraton card-tables with the legs set out from the frame. The first is used as a dressing-table—as is entirely practicable. The second has the ellipse as a centre inlay. The panels are of satinwood.

This was an era of the small table and there are many attractive examples. Tea-tables and sewing-tables were frequent. All have the characteristic contours and ornament.

The Mirror-supports in the small dressing-table shown in Plate 77 are a trifle clumsy and heavy and suggest that it may be a late piece in which those faults were creeping in as an unhappy forerunner of the Empire style. Otherwise it is most graceful.

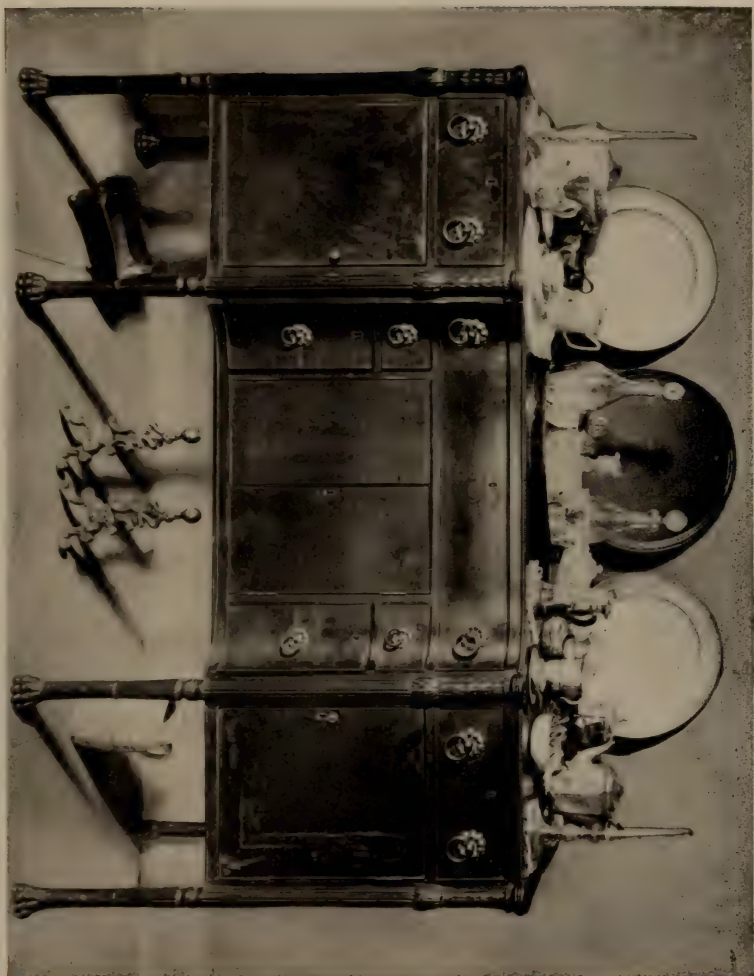
A superb piece of furniture is the dressing-table illustrated in Plate 78. The ringed treatment of the upper legs was very much used in New England but was also occasionally employed by Duncan Phyfe.

The slender tripod table with rat's feet appearing in Plate 80 is of these classic years.

The little "bason stand" at the left in Plate 46 is a direct, slightly simplified, rendering of the central design in Plate 42 of Sheraton's "Drawing-Book." At the other extreme of Plate 46 is an excellent Sheraton chair.

DESKS, SECRETARIES, CHESTS-OF-DRAWERS, AND CHINA-CLOSETS

Fundamentally the case-piece is a box on legs or feet, more or less ornamented in a manner common to



SHERATON SIDEBOARD WITH PAW-FEET
By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend



Photograph by Whitenack

A. TRANSITION TABLE, CHIPPENDALE TO HEPPLEWHITE



Photograph by Dillon

B. HEPPLEWHITE INLAID CARD-TABLE

Both by Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



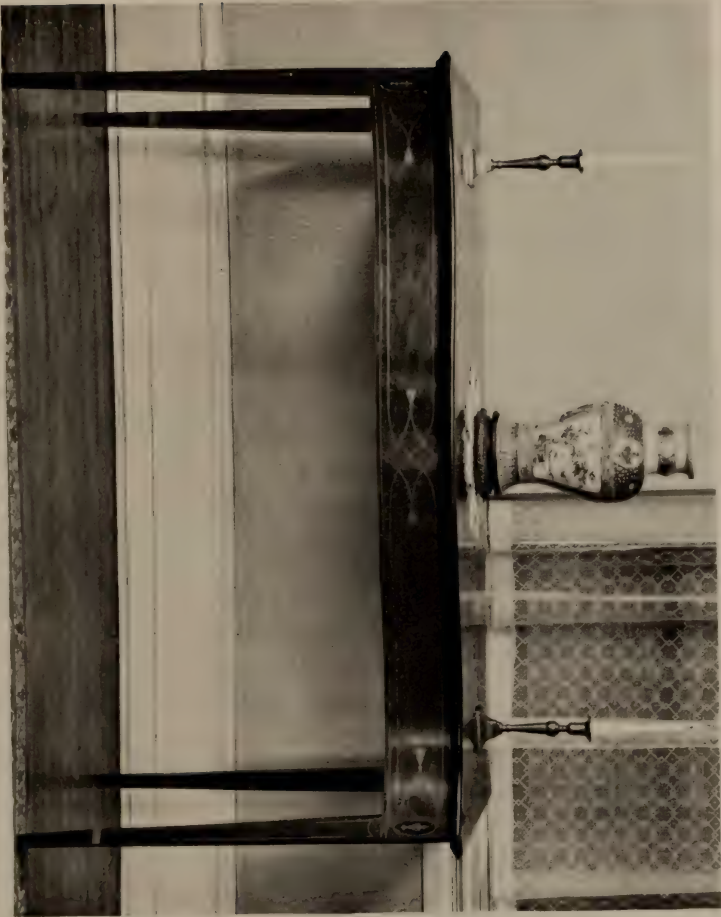
HEPPLEWHITE SEMI-CIRCULAR CARD-TABLE
Of the general contour of Hepplewhite's Plate 60
By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum

PLATE 74



Photograph by Dillon

HEPPLEWHITE INLAID CARD-TABLE MADE IN THE SOUTH
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



Photograph by Dillon

HEPPEWHITE INLAID SIDETABLE
By Courtesy of Howard Reisman, Esq.



Photograph by Dillon

SHERATON INLAID CARD-TABLES MADE IN NEW ENGLAND

By Courtesy Howard Reifsnyder, Esq. By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum

PLATE 77



SHERATON MAHOGANY DRESSING-TABLE
By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend



Photograph by Whitenack

SHERATON DRESSING-TABLE WITH RINGED LEGS, 1800-10

Mahogany with edges of drawers cross-banded in rosewood

CLASSIC WALL-BRACKETS FROM THE BURD HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.

the whole period. It will be realised then how difficult it is to differentiate the types of Hepplewhite and Sheraton. There was no revolution, no radical change. Into the Neo-Classic style of which the Hepplewhite firm was then leader came in 1790 a new individuality—that of Sheraton, which gradually imposed itself upon the movement. From the first we of course find examples that are definitely Sheraton, but by the side of these are others differing very slightly indeed from those of five years before. The new comer did not greatly vary the existing decorative *motifs*, and so in conservative cabinet-pieces where a pediment of Sheraton type was not superimposed, where the legs were not extended, or other individual features added, we can scarcely find more than an indication in one direction or the other.

In such cases there are two opposing *tendencies* that if remembered go far in our aid. It has already been mentioned that Hepplewhite retained much more of the curvilinear element of the previous era than did Sheraton; that is to say that, as an expert friend expresses it, he had a love for the *shaping* of contours. Sheraton clung to the rectilinear, but when he indulged in curves they were long and graceful. His straight lines were likewise long—his *tendency* was toward the tall and narrow, the compressed and the severe; sometimes almost the *tight*. And the marvel of it is that no furniture has more of *charm* than Sheraton's.

Let us apply this test. The little desk in Plate 79 is angular, narrow and high-shouldered. And how lovely a piece it is!

It has no distinguishing *features*. What might seem to be such are soon disposed of, and this will clear the way for the future. The tambour-slide is not a characteristic: it appeared in London in the seventeen-

eighties and is common to both schools, though in America more frequently appearing in the Sheraton pieces.

The French splay foot (Plates 80 and 81) with or without the curved apron between them, is sometimes credited to Hepplewhite, probably because his book was the earlier. But Shearer shows it also, and, according to date of publication, his book, "The London Book of Prices," was earlier still. In fact and in furniture it is entirely common to both and to Sheraton as well.

It will be noted that there are two types of apron—also promiscuously used—that which appears here, and that illustrated in Plate 85 B. Nor is the banding of the edges of drawers typical; for it appears in both Hepplewhite and Sheraton furniture.

But in this desk (Plate 80) so entirely Sheraton-esque in its square-shoulderedness, there are also small *features* belonging to that school—the brass knobs of the desk and the dropped rings above the tambour.

Both the above examples are of New England make. The slant-topped desk shown in Plate 81 is of Philadelphia and is a piece of much distinction. It will be noted that the type of inlay in Plates 79 and 81 differs very little. For larger surfaces of inlay the northern section might employ maple or birch and the southern satinwood, but this was not invariable.

High chests and highboys were by now definitely abandoned in favour of low chests-of-drawers. In the Hepplewhite example illustrated in Plate 82 we see the "shaping" referred to—not only in the serpentine front but in the apron and in the tipping outward of the feet. There is a flowing quality in the whole appearance of the piece. In other examples it will be betrayed in a different manner, for these last two

features are confined to furniture found in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and so are local. In the card-tables Plates 72 B and 74, side-table Plate 75, and the sideboard Plate 63, this quality of "shaping" will be noted. In the latter two the legs are not square but follow the curve of the top both on their fronts and backs. Hepplewhite chair-backs are wholly curvilinear and his sofas almost always show the rounded or the camel-back.

The more usual type of Hepplewhite chest-of-drawers was the serpentine form with but slight chamfers and with straight bracket feet; thus securing a much narrower corner and lighter and more refined effect than the early Chippendale chest by Gostelow illustrated in Plate 42.

The simple but very pretty bow-front Sheraton chests-of-drawers used to be frequent in antique shops but now are much less so—most of them have evidently disappeared into private ownership.

Recently seen in the window of a Philadelphia antique-shop was an attractive Sheraton chest-of-drawers, flat-fronted, with reeded stiles at the sides, and slender turned legs. The drawers were panelled in the triple arrangement characteristic of the Portsmouth, N. H. pieces above mentioned, the central panel being the narrower and of maple while the side panels were of mahogany—see Plate 82 A. Being at once curious whether this mode had extended to Pennsylvania, I stepped inside and asked the proprietor if he knew the history of the piece. His answer was: "It came from New England." To that section therefore this individuality evidently belongs.

In Plates 83 and 85 B we see two secretary-book-cases without inlay and with typical Sheraton pediments. The second, with pointed-arch ("Gothic")

doors is in New England and was probably made there: the first with round arches was found in Camden, New Jersey, and was made in Philadelphia or its neighbourhood. This feature of the four arches disposed in this manner would seem to be American, as I have not noted it elsewhere.

Plate 83 shows the desk at which I am now writing, and, because of its unusual lowness, when I acquired it some years ago I promptly christened it "the dumpling." Its total height is but 5 ft., $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., and its breadth 3 ft., $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. All the five outside drawers are of beautifully grained mahogany veneer, and these drawers are slightly rounded outward towards their centres and are cock-beaded. Inside the doors are three additional small drawers and a single shelf for books.

First among the larger pieces, because of its extensive travel, is mentioned the secretary-bookcase in Plate 84 with its Salem, Massachusetts, label, now in South Africa; reproduced through the kindness of Mr. C. Reginald Grundy, Editor of the invaluable London *Connoisseur*. "Through what vicissitudes it has passed may never now be known" but it has been there "for many years." The brass finials are missing, but it retains much of its original glass. I am particularly happy in giving this illustration in that, so far as I am aware, it adds one more name to our list of known American craftsmen. The extensive employment of the ellipse I have mentioned as so frequent in Sheraton work is certainly evident here—in the tracery as well as the base. Another type of Sheraton pediment is seen in this piece.

A secretary-bookcase recently illustrated in *The Antiquarian* by courtesy of Mr. I. Sack and exceedingly close to the above example bears the label of



Photograph by Whitenack

SHERATON NEW ENGLAND DESK (C. 1800) AND SHERATON CHAIR

By Courtesy Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.

PLATE 80



SHERATON NEW ENGLAND TAMBOUR DESK (C. 1810) AND RAT-FOOT TABLE

Hopkins House, Boston

By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend



Photograph by Dillon

SHERATON LIGHT MAHOGANY INLAID DESK, C. 1800

Made in Philadelphia

By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.



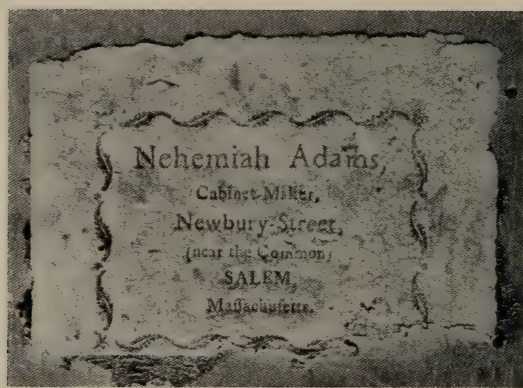
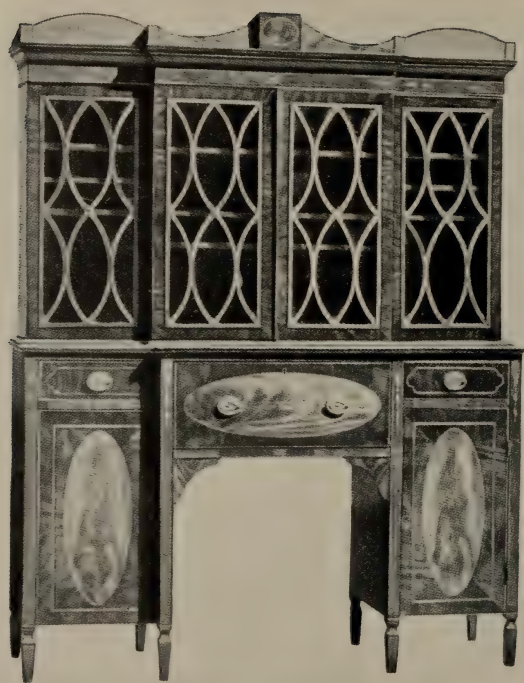
A. HEPPLEWHITE MAPLE AND MAHOGANY CHEST-OF-DRAWERS, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.
By Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum



B. DESK OF MOUNTAIN CHERRY
Made in Philadelphia
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.
Photograph by Dillon



SHERATON MAHOGANY SECRETARY-BOOKCASE, C. 1800
Made in the Philadelphia neighbourhood
Property of the Author



A SALEM SECRETARY-BOOKCASE IN SOUTH AFRICA WITH ITS LABEL
The Property of W. R. Morrison, Esq., Cape Town
By Courtesy of *The Connoisseur*, London



A. PEDIMENT FROM SHERATON'S "CABINET DICTIONARY," 1803



B. SHERATON SECRETARY-BOOKCASE WITH GOTHIC-ARCHED DOORS, C. 1800
In the possession of Walter C. Harris, Esq., Salem, Mass.
By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend



SHERATON TAMBOUR SECRETARY-BOOKCASE, C. 1800

Made in Massachusetts

By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York City

Edmund Johnson, also of Salem; so that the type was evidently there a favourite one. In this piece the tracery of the doors is rectangular and diagonal and, as was frequent, divides the glazing into thirteen sections typical of the number of the American states. The American eagle, furthermore, perches upon its pediment.

Two superb Sheraton secretary-bookcases are illustrated in Plates 86 and 87. The first, in light mahogany, inlaid, has the flap-desk with pulls and came from Massachusetts. Plate 87, of rather darker mahogany, has the quadrant form of desk and is from the Philadelphia neighbourhood.

It is by no means always easy to be sure of the locality in which a certain piece of American furniture was made. The collector of course buys from many sources; the dealer may not always be successful in tracing the history of his purchase and for information he is more or less at the mercy of his informant, though his experience and in some cases his expert knowledge of the cabinet-making methods of the different sections nevertheless stands him in good stead and enables him to check up. We must also remember the frequent migration of families. When a piece has remained in one location through a number of generations there is a fair presumption that this is its origin.

The making of such beautiful furniture as in Plate 87, found in the Philadelphia neighbourhood, usually lies between some one of the notable Philadelphia craftsmen and men of not distant *locale* such as William Eckerson of New Brunswick, New Jersey, who did similarly excellent work. William Kerwood of Trenton was another fine cabinet-maker.

Though Sheraton sometimes employed flowing designs in his tracery for doors, and also the ellipse type noted in Plate 84, his preference was in accord

with his rectangular and diagonal tendency in general. This is seen in both Plates 86 and 87. Plate 86 again shows the brass knobs.

The lower tambour slide in this secretary is set back so as to be out of the way of the knees of one using it for writing purposes: it will be observed that the curves of the recession in the sideboard in Plate 67 are the same as here.

Though there is no extant testimony to that effect, I have always felt it to be most probable that Sheraton throughout his career was designing furniture for cabinet-makers: certain it is that we frequently encounter English furniture not appearing in his books and which yet is so characteristic of his design that we do not see how it could have emanated from any other hand. Another indication is that all the way through the seventeen-nineties we find the type of pediment seen in Plates 85 B—87 employed perhaps in England and certainly in America more than any other, and yet there is not a trace of it in Sheraton's "Drawing-Book." But when in 1803 the "Cabinet Dictionary" appeared there he gives a development of the type (Plate 85 A), thus sealing it as his own.

The fine china-closet shown in Plate 88 is not very definitely of either school and it will be interesting to follow this out as an example.

In contour and proportion it is very much like some English Hepplewhite pieces but lacks just the frieze decoration that stamps these pieces as Hepplewhite—alternate fluting and *paterae* originally derived from Adam and much used by Hepplewhite, especially in his earlier years. It also resembles some Sheraton cabinet-pieces but they are taller and narrower than the present example.



Photograph by Whitenack

SHERATON SECRETARY-BOOKCASE IN INLAID MAHOGANY, C. 1800

MADE IN THE PHILADELPHIA NEIGHBOURHOOD

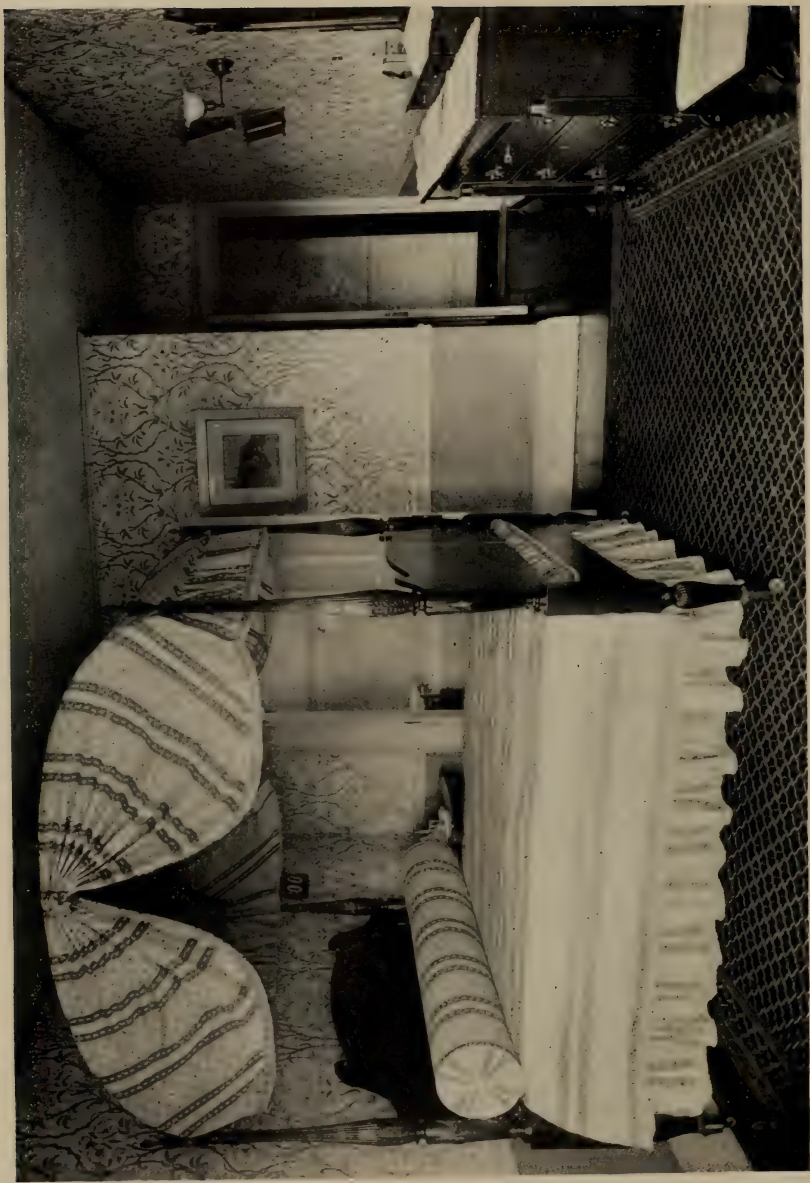
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq., Philadelphia



NEO-CLASSIC CHINA-CLOSET IN LIGHT MAHOGANY, INLAID
By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York City



SHERATON BEDSTEAD AT UPSALA, GERMANTOWN, PHILADELPHIA



SHERATON FIELD-BED IN THE HOME OF MRS. JAMES PROCTOR, HAMILTON, MASSACHUSETTS
By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend

The topping of much Hepplewhite furniture is very plain, consisting merely of a few lines of moulding with or without a fine dentil and pear-drops surmounting a frieze. The Sheraton style continued this, made a greater use of dentil and drop, and even still further simplified the mouldings. In this respect the china-closet is of the Sheraton type.

The type of inlay in the cornice was employed by Hepplewhite and continued by Sheraton.

Door-tracery was more apt to be of this rectilinear and diagonal character under Sheraton than under Hepplewhite but is seen in the work of both schools.

Legs do not differentiate in cabinet-work, and I have come to believe that the canting outward of square legs in American furniture means as little.

The handles here used were common to both schools.

So why should we name this piece, or others of like character—beauty does not always require a label!

BEDSTEADS

Most bedsteads during these years did not very definitely follow English examples, but they lean toward the Sheraton rather than the Hepplewhite type. Two fine examples are given here—Plate 89 at historic Upsala, Germantown, Philadelphia, and Plate 90 in Massachusetts.

Special attention is drawn to the illustrations of this chapter, as these carefully selected, chaste, and dignified pieces are representative of some of the finest furniture made in America. Many of them also considerably differ from contemporary English pieces, and the ability of our craftsmen is attested not only by fine design and workmanship but by the *use* of these classic styles as their own *metier* without a slavish

copying of models. Little furniture ornamented by combined painting and inlay was attempted here, but some fine pieces were made by Robert Fisher of Baltimore.

Our furniture does not of course compare in *elaboration* of beauty with the exceedingly decorative English pieces constructed for extensive and formal establishments, but they are in every way equal to the remaining furniture of that country and often surpass it in quality of workmanship. During the Sheraton period in England, and especially toward the close of the century, there was much irregularity in this respect.

THE AMERICAN *DIRECTOIRE* STYLE

A PARTICULARLY acute case of suffering from bad company is that of the *Directoire* style.

This association will presently be apparent, but the result of it has been that, save to the work of Duncan Phyfe, little attention or appreciation has been accorded the delightful furniture and decoration of the American or English *Directoire* styles. Even the latest English books covering these years illustrate but a few pieces of the furniture of *Directoire* inspiration, and the renowned Victoria and Albert Museum as yet possesses but a comparatively small selection. Most of it remains unknown in private houses, though some passes through the hands of dealers. In America much of the furniture is similarly neglected. It is quite time that we changed all this.

The cause is evident: the French *Directoire* style, upon which the characteristic features of the furniture and decoration of both countries at this period were based, was formerly submerged as merely the beginning of the Empire style, and so was included in the emphatic and general condemnation meted out to the pomposities of the first Napoleon. It was indeed a transition style, but one that had a powerful effect on the decoration and furniture of all Europe and America. At its appearance it was avidly seized upon, so that we speedily find an Italian, a Spanish, an English, and an American *Directoire* derivation, and in each case with the happiest results.

The term *Directoire* is conversationally employed to cover the years from the overthrow of the monarchy of Louis XVI till the establishment of the Empire in

1804, thus including the Revolutionary period, before, and the Consulate after the Directorate but before the Empire.

We must recognize two trends in this new French mode. One was the simplification of the beautiful but ornate classic style of Louis Seize to accord with the ideals of the new Republic—a simplification carried out entirely in accord with French tradition. To these pieces should be added furniture derived, it is true, from classic models, or suggested by them, but handled with the deftness and lightness of the Gallic manner. Together these comprise a very considerable portion of the product of the period, but also leave another considerable portion decidedly to be reckoned with—that composed of heavy and often awkward furniture resulting from the growing mania of copying for modern use anything and everything from antiquity—Egyptian and Etruscan, Greek and Roman—which mania culminated in the grandiose productions of Napoleon's Empire, jarring and clashing with everything hitherto known in France. The first trend was almost wholly fine in its results; those of the last were what we may always expect from the logical carrying to its conclusion of a thoroughly illogical project.

And so we see that not only has this first, simplified, historic, and truly Gallic phase suffered from being confused with the Empire style, but that it was beset with a foe of its own household. Indeed the black sheep of alien tendency was the prolific member of the family, in that it gave birth to the full Empire style, while the legitimately French mode died "without heirs." And with it died the glory of Gallic mobiliary art.

While, later, we had in America an abundance—yes, a superabundance—of this French Empire influence, and while the *Directoire* and Empire styles—

as have styles in all times and in all places—merged the one into the other, it so happened that there was a period here in which furniture in all its purity of historic type was made not only in New York by Duncan Phyfe, but in Philadelphia, the South, and New England.

A LEGITIMATE DIVORCE

For the first time, then, that this has been done, I have separated this American furniture from its undesirable companionship; and a study of the illustrations will quickly make it evident that given its own just opportunity this *Directoire* type triumphantly emerges as at once one of the simplest, most elegant, and loveliest of styles.

This I believe to be in itself a quite sufficient justification for the step I have taken, but if further reason be necessary it can quickly be adduced. In every book—English and American—touching upon the subject, with which I am acquainted, obloquy is heaped upon the head of Sheraton for following the French Empire style to the “utter ruin” of his furniture design. That in his last days of misery and penury he did do extremely bad things—and was probably forced so to do by the trend of the times, to keep himself alive—is undeniable; but on the other hand, has there been discrimination shown, and is he given credit for the entirely delightful pieces bearing his characteristics that were created under the influence of this historic phase of French *Directoire* art?

And will the reader, for a moment, turn to Plate 95 A and note the perfect grace and proportion of that American chair directly derived from French *Directoire* examples. Now regarding one of the English chairs of this same contour what said the late, noted, Percy

Macquoid, who in general showed himself so fully appreciative of beauty in furniture? He refers to the "gap in taste" between this type and the chairs of twenty years earlier as showing "so great a difference from all tradition of what was beautiful, that the mystery of this sudden change cannot be explained."

If association and prejudice could so blind such a man as Mr. Macquoid is it not quite time that we did away with both association and prejudice!

THE *DIRECTOIRE* STYLE IN FRANCE

Unnoticed beginnings eventuating in a new mode are naturally always at work before the style itself has sufficiently developed to become recognized. So in the last days of Louis Seize we already see some considerable simplification of the mode of that reign in response to the growing Republican tendency of the times and the decided drift toward a more literal classicism. Jacques Louis David, a tremendous classicist of the most rigid description and of the widest influence in all affairs of art, made painter to the King in 1783, was nine years later—in 1792—elected to the Convention, ordered the furniture for it, and was "chief manager of the great national festivals and spectacles of the Republic." Later he was patronised by Napoleon, who appointed him his chief painter. It was David who presented to Napoleon Percier and Fontaine, "the creators of the official Empire style."

One of the world-famous paintings is David's portrait of Mme. Recamier in which she is seated upon a Grecian sofa of his own design. As early as 1790 there existed in his studio furniture "faithfully imitated from the antique" designed by him and executed by Georges Jacob, the founder of the celebrated dynasty

—Georges himself 1765–97, his sons Jacob frères 1797 to October 1803, and the surviving son Francis-Honoré, under the title Jacob-Desmalter & Cie, till 1825; the firm continuing in the family till 1847. Each firm stamped the frames of its furniture with a separate mark, but, as we shall have need hereafter to remember in my tracing of the sources of American furniture, we cannot always work these matters out chronologically, for we have not before us *everything* they made; and, as is well known in France, the later firms continued to make furniture that had originally appeared under Georges the elder, as well as their own designs. A chair *made*, therefore, by Jacob frères may have been *originated* by the founder of the family fortunes some few years earlier. They made much other fine furniture, but their great specialties were chairs and sofas.

There were other designers, Dugourc especially, working in the antique or near-antique vein, but the disturbances of the times prevented the actual rendering of many such designs until the Consulate and Empire years.

The Revolution actually began with the sitting of the National Assembly in May 1789, but was not completed till the forming of the Convention and the proclamation of the Republic in September, 1792. The guilds were then suppressed, production discouraged, and comparatively little was again made till the establishment of the Directorate in 1795. Under that régime and the Consulate, end of 1799, all work was again encouraged, expositions were held, and a museum of applied art announced. Napoleon, as consul for life, in 1802, orders gilded woods as in royal times. On May 18, 1804 he became Emperor.

THE FURNITURE

AMERICAN CHAIRS OF FRENCH INSPIRATION

That many of our furniture-styles at this period derived from France is a matter of common information: the question has been *how* they did so—how our craftsmen arrived at sufficient knowledge for working purposes: for probably very little of the French furniture was brought over, and in any event it would seldom be at their disposal. Yet the use of those styles here was geographically widespread.

Considering the results presently to be shown, it would seem almost certain that our workmen availed themselves of the following source:

Throughout this and succeeding periods were published in Paris fine illustrated magazines—*Journal des Dames et des Modes* and *Journal de la Mode et du Goût*—now regarded in France as indispensable to a study of these styles, though “certain of these models were used, others quickly forgotten.” These magazines contained illustrations not only of costumes, of carriages—and how the parvenues did love those carriages!—but of wall-papers, of furniture, of textiles, and the like.

A collection of the furniture plates was issued, probably not a great many years ago, in Paris, in an undated handsome quarto volume entitled “*Meubles et Objets de Goût, 1796–1830*,” and from this I have made tracings of several chairs, by permission of William Helburn, Inc., New York. We shall soon see how these styles were used in American work.

As these magazines contained hundreds of illustrations, it is *possible* that our skilled workmen may have found in them sufficient information for their needs; but, in tracing back the various contours and decor-

ative *motifs*, it appears equally indisputable to me that they availed themselves of the modes of the Jacobs, and this is a problem decidedly more puzzling. For our own use to-day illustrations of a large body of the work of the three firms are accessible in the handy little portfolios credited under my tracings, again by permission of Mr. Helburn, but, so far as I have been able to learn, none existed at the period itself; and so it is difficult to see how Americans could have become intimately acquainted with their product unless they secured patterns direct. We know that David's designs were widely copied in France and possibly Jacob's were also and were illustrated in some source as yet unknown to us; but however the models were secured the reader will find it extremely interesting to trace these origins of our delightful workmanship.

As early as the last years of Louis Seize there were beautiful sofas (*Lits de Repos*) with all the wealth of decoration of that ornate style but with roll-over arms (see Plate 92 A) and this roll, extending itself to chair-backs, was one of the prominent features of the style and will be seen in many of the illustrations of American chairs here. Another mode, also widely adopted, was the extension of the upper back-rail of chairs beyond the stiles, as is shown in figure 2, Plate 91, though our chair-backs never had so deep a curve—see Plates 93 and 101. There was also the horn-back a close approximation to which will be seen in Plate 102.

Let us look again at the series of four tracings at the top of Plate 91. It will be noted that in figure 1 the back is hollowed not only inward but downward—and so are most of the Phyfe chairs, and those in Plate 100. Phyfe also used the hollowed cross-bars with rosette, shown in figure 3, and the diamond-back

(but without the cross-bar) of figure 4. Another of his forms—though there was not room here to illustrate this and some of the above—was the horseshoe seat. This, too, appeared before the death of Louis Seize and is seen in the little later Revolutionary chair in Plate 92 B and in the American decorated chair to the left in Plate 100. Just below it (Plate 92 C) is a simplified leg finishing in the spiral twist, appearing to some extent in French, English, and American *Directoire* furniture, but which played such a prominent rôle in our Empire period.

The rosette or "button" seen at the front sides of many Phyfe chairs (including Plate 98 B) derived from such French examples as that shown in Plate 91, figure 6.

Very probably the diagonal back-straps with rosettes in the chair just referred to (Plate 92 B) will seem familiar: they should do so, for they were taken up by Sheraton in England and in America as well in such examples as Plate 93, which also shows the extended back-rail.

This same French chair (Plate 92 B), and that in Plate 94 A, shows the simplified, round, turned leg that now took the place of the ornamental fluted leg of the monarchy. In the normal style of Louis Seize all four legs were always straight, but in the late years, when the cry everywhere was "back to antiquity," the *back* legs were flared outward, the front ones remaining straight, as in these two chairs. This construction also extensively appears in American examples.

But soon the front legs also were flared in the same manner, and we have the form shown in Plate 91, figures 5 and 6. The tie-rods beneath the seat in this first French example were of brass, and it is rather a



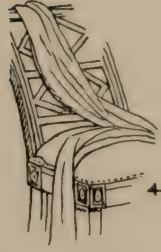
Directoire 1796-99



Consulat 1800-02



Consulat 1800-02



Directoire 1796-99



5



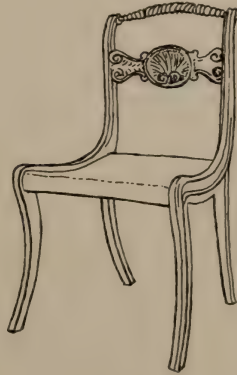
6

A. FRENCH CHAIRS. THE INSPIRATION OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN EXAMPLES
From "Meubles et Objets de Goût" by permission Wm. Helburn, Inc., New York



7

Arthur Edwards, London



8

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

B. ENGLISH CHAIRS OF *DIRECTOIRE* TYPE

PLATE 92



A. Louis XVI *Lst de Repos*
already showing rolled top



B. Chair of French Revolutionary Period
with back adopted in Sheraton furniture



C. Louis XVI chair-leg with spiral finish

All made by G. Jacobs

From "Les Siegès de Georges Jacobs"

By permission of William Helburn, Inc., New York

PLATE 93



"LATE SHERATON" ARM CHAIR WITH *DIRECTOIRE* BACK

Made in Philadelphia

From the Cadwalader house

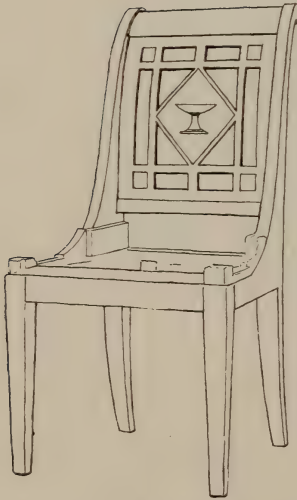
By Courtesy of Estate of James Curran

Note Plate 92 B

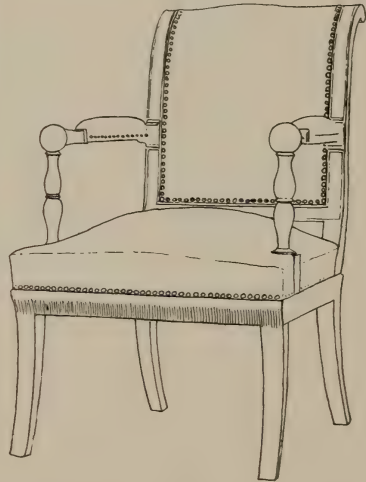
PLATE 94



A. French *Directoire* chair with simplified straight front legs
Covered in contemporary silk



B



C

French *Directoire* chairs with curves from which the type developed shown in Plate 95 A, 96, and 98

All made by and stamped Jacob Frères
From "Les Sièges de Jacob Frères"
By permission of William Helburn, Inc., New York



A. NEW YORK DIRECTOIRE CHAIR WITH AMERICAN EAGLE
Loaned to the Metropolitan Museum by R. T. H. Halsey, Esq.



B. DUNCAN PHYFE CURULE CHAIR WITH FRENCH BACK
By Courtesy of R. T. Halsey, Esq.



A. PHYFE ARM CHAIR AT P. T. JOHNSON HOUSE
BEVERLY FARMS
By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend



B. DUNCAN PHYFE ARM CHAIR
Loaned to the Metropolitan Museum by
R. T. Haines Halsey, Esq.

See Plate 97 A opposite



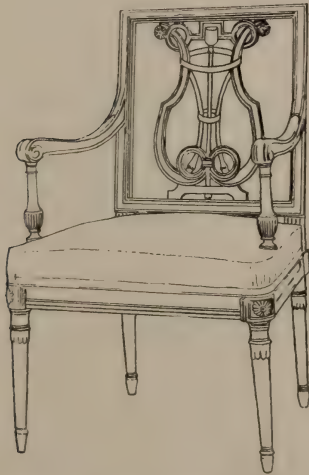
Debenham & Freebody

Wm. Whiteley, Ltd.

A. English "Late Sheraton" chairs

See Duncan Phyfe chairs, Plate 96

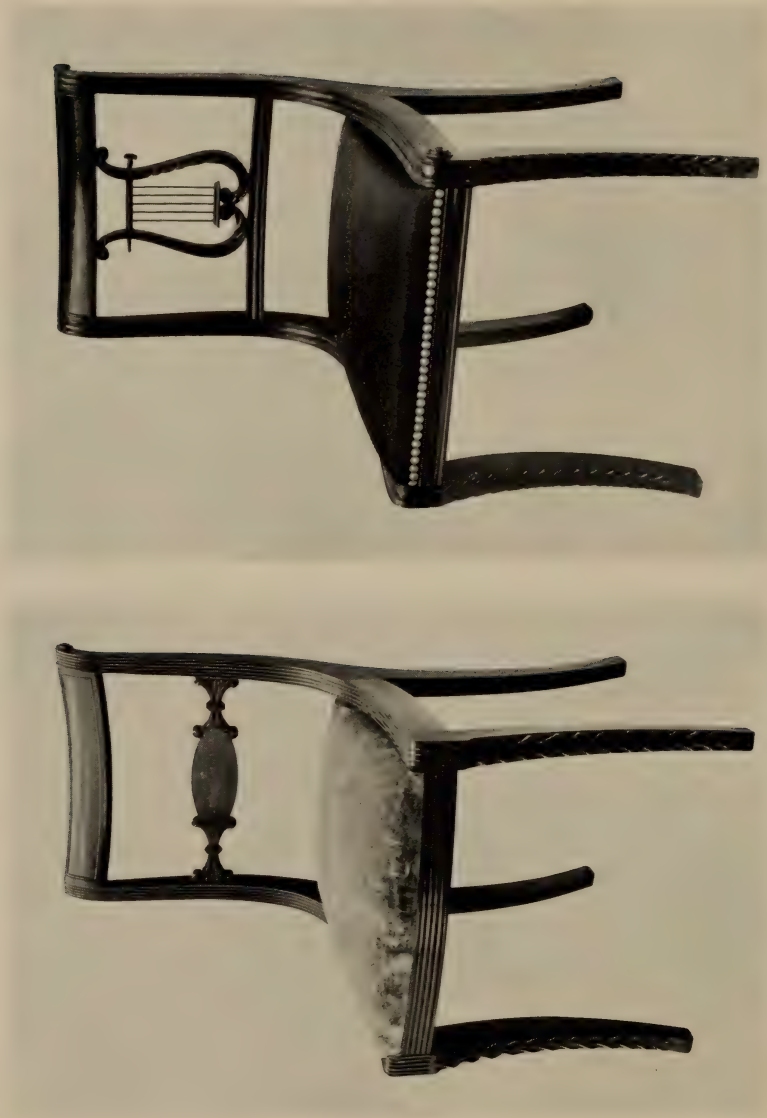
B. From Sheraton's "Cabinet Dictionary," 1803



C. French Revolutionary *Fauteuil* stamped G. Jacob. See Plate 99

From "Les Sièges de Georges Jacob"

By permission of Wm. Helburn, Inc., New York



A
DUNCAN PHYFE SIDE CHAIRS OF *DIRECTOIRE* TYPE
B
Loaned by R. T. Haines Halsey, Esq., to the Metropolitan Museum

pity that so unusual and attractive a feature was not taken up here.

We now reach the development adopted more largely in America than any other, and which extended into the Empire period both in France and in this country. I think, too, that I have discovered how this development came about. If the reader will refer to Plate 94 B he will see how the back-support began to extend forward, encroaching upon the seat-rail; in the next figure the seat-rail is hollowed under and the legs concave and then flare outward. If we join those two features we have the graceful series of curves forming the front of the chair in Plate 95 A (an American chair copied from French examples) sweeping down in the front from the volute at the top into the seat-rail and then inward and down the concave front leg. And this construction as naturally eventuates in the lovely serpentine line in the *back*, again from the volute to the foot of the back leg. Both of these graceful series of curves came into the furniture world for the first time with this French *Revolution-Directoire* style.

The completed contour is important to us because of its frequent use in this and the following period here. Sheraton adopted and shows it, in October, 1803, in his "Cabinet Dictionary" Appendix Plate No. 4, elaborating it with heads and ornament above the legs and adding paw-feet. The English chair in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Plate 91, figure 8, here, is of the "Trafalgar" period—1805.

Whenever the strictly Classic influence seizes upon humanity we shall see the ancient curule chair occurring as one of its early manifestations. It was so in the Renaissance period, and in the French volume previously referred to several examples of stools and chairs

appear in the Consulate section. It was promptly adopted by Thomas Sheraton and appears in his "Cabinet Dictionary" of 1803. The back of Duncan Phyfe's curule chair, Plate 95 B, is French throughout. Its top-rail is hollowed downward as well as inward, and its double-hoop joined by a rosette is straight *Directoire*.

A remarkably satisfactory adoption of French forms will be seen in the pair of decorated chairs illustrated in Plate 100. Besides other features which will now be recognised, is the finishing of the legs with the bamboo ringing and the bulging front stretchers seen in so much French Provincial furniture. Pointing downward in the upper legs of the chair to the right is the little "palmette," and the painted ornament of both chairs is of *Directoire* character. Such seating-furniture as this would be charming for the bedroom or the breakfast-room. Those in Plate 101 are of generally similar character but are of mahogany.

As will be seen by referring to the Phyfe chairs, here, two of his favourite decorative *motifs* were reeding—which in all his furniture he indulged in almost to excess—and a leaf which is not the flowing acanthus of Chippendale or Sheraton but which is more akin to the water-leaf. He employed a dog's foot on some of his curved-leg chairs. The round, reeded, leg was also used in his Sheraton pieces. The lyre (Plate 98 B) was a *motif* much in evidence in all countries during the classic movement, beginning with the Louis XVI style in France and Robert Adam in England.

ENGLISH BORROWINGS AND TRANSMITTALS

But England had been the source of our previous American styles: does that source now abruptly cease to be our inspiration, or does it partially continue its

influence? And if the latter be true, to what degree does its furniture differ from the French?

It is perhaps not generally realised that about the middle of the eighteenth century French was the language of the court of England and that in manners as well as in costume the effect of Parisian fashion was enormous, extending through the latter half of the century and the beginning of the nineteenth. The English furniture of the period is usually denominated "late Sheraton" or "late Georgian," and while, naturally, many features of Sheraton's early style continued, that style was almost metamorphosed by this new French influence. As early as January, 1793, Sheraton publishes a plate of "A Dining Parlour in imitation of the Prince of Wales's" and in describing that of the Prince says: "The chairs are of mahogany, made in the style of the French, with broad top-rails hanging over each back foot" (as in the second French chair in the series of four tracings); "the legs are turned, and the seats covered with red leather. I could not shew the curtains of each window without confusion, but they are of the French kind." From then onward the various features of the *Directoire* and Empire styles were quickly adopted in England as they made their appearance. There were always adaptations as well as adoptions, and especially in one direction. For once London was more luxurious than Paris: the ideal of Spartan republican simplicity had seized upon France, while England held to all the luxury and comfort of its pleasure-loving eighteenth century. So we find in some pieces of the Consulate style in France a rigidity that provoked from Roederer in 1802 the expression: "I wish furniture made for me: I do not wish to remake myself for my furniture." A rigidity as regards colour was also setting in, and as in England a "full palette"

was employed, the difference in this respect, though not in style, was more marked in the field of decoration than it was in furniture.

The difficulty in determining to what degree American *Directoire* furniture owes its inspiration directly to France and how much to France *by way of England* will now be realised. It is a very interesting point, from its bearing on sociology as well as on furniture and decoration.

For the showing of English precedents for our own product, we to a large extent must look to actual English furniture of the period rather than to books; for the purer French *Directoire* style there adopted falls, in date, *between* Sheraton's two valuable volumes; and there were none others covering just this phase.

Though the last edition of his "Drawing Book" was published in 1802, no plates there appear dated later than 1794. This was rather early for many features of the new mode to be taken up, engraved, and published by Sheraton, and hence in this volume we do not find a great deal in that vein.

Then in 1803 arrived that chunky little octavo, his "Cabinet Dictionary," embracing the latest styles in over eighty plates. It is of great aid, but does not show certain types found in existing English furniture and copied in America.

With few exceptions the case-pieces illustrated in this volume are in Sheraton's own mode, some a little, others not at all affected by the French movement. Seating-furniture and tables tell us another story. A "Grecian Squab" (sofa), of which a tracing appears later here, is a fine piece of work. So also are many of the tables. We have the *Directoire* form of chair with straight simplified front legs and flared back legs in the tracing in Plate 97 B. The roll-back and leg

flared front and back appear in the very beginning—his Plate 2, dated September, 1802. Two *bergeres* are quite good and there are charming small tables and sofa-tables. Besides these we have sprawling contours, awkward curves, and broken legged griffins—or some other indeterminate species of beast—equal to the worst phase of the French Consulate. A “conversation-chair” (his Plate 29) is about as disorganised a piece of “design” as had till then been perpetrated upon British soil.

And so we find this book to be a strange compound of good and bad; with fine persistence of his own qualities, excellent adoption in some pieces, and in others a wholehearted taking over of wretched design, apparently without even a qualm.

I find very little here or in Thomas Hope’s book of 1807 that was *directly* adopted by our craftsmen during our *Directoire* period.

Ackermann’s Repository, a monthly illustrated magazine of modes, furniture, and the like, published in London, has been mentioned as of much aid to our workmen, and it no doubt was so when the Empire style was adopted. Its publication did not begin early enough, however, to be of much value as a guide to *Directoire* modes. The volume of 1809, for instance, shows a chair of *Directoire* form but with an elaborate Empire back-ornament.

It would have been interesting to illustrate here more actual English furniture, but due limits confined me to a few chairs, sofas, and tables. Plate 91, figures 7 and 8, shows two side chairs. Phyfe’s chair-forms are usually French, but a glance at the two English chairs in Plate 97 A and Phyfe’s arm-chairs in Plate 96 leave us in little doubt as to his immediate inspiration in these cases. Particularly lovely are the two Phila-

delphia late Sheraton arm-chairs with low backs in Plate 99. The French Revolutionary chair in Plate 97 C shows their ultimate source, but the two are not especially close and there was probably an English intermediary.

Most of us are familiar with the low-backed late Sheraton chairs, of which there were a number of variations, but a decidedly unusual pair appears in Plate 102. As mentioned in the previous chapter, either Sheraton must have designed much furniture that does not appear in his books or his followers did it for him, for there are many varieties of these chairs in England and a number of derivations here. For the most part they combine features both French and English.

SOFAS

Three principal types of *Directoire* sofa appeared in America. The first of these originated in the last years of Louis Seize. It is exemplified by the *lit de repos* made by the elder Georges Jacob and stamped with his name (Plate 103 A) and by the altogether beautiful example of Mr. Reifsnnyder's in Plate 104, made in Philadelphia but which would do credit to Paris itself. Then there was the "Grecian bed," of which in 1790 Talma the popular young French tragedian had the only specimen in Paris, but which soon found its way to popularity. Sheraton of course adopted it, and it is shown in Plate 109 A as traced from his "Cabinet Dictionary." An American example, made in the South, appears in Plate 105.

And finally we have the roll-arm sofa, exemplified here in Plate 106. This is by Phyfe of New York. These three locations, alone, show the extent to which the *Directoire* style penetrated in this country, and there are also other specimens made in New England.



Photograph by Dillon

"LATE SHERATON" LOW-BACK ARM CHAIRS OF *DIRECTOIRE* TYPE, MADE IN PHILADELPHIA

Note legs as well as back

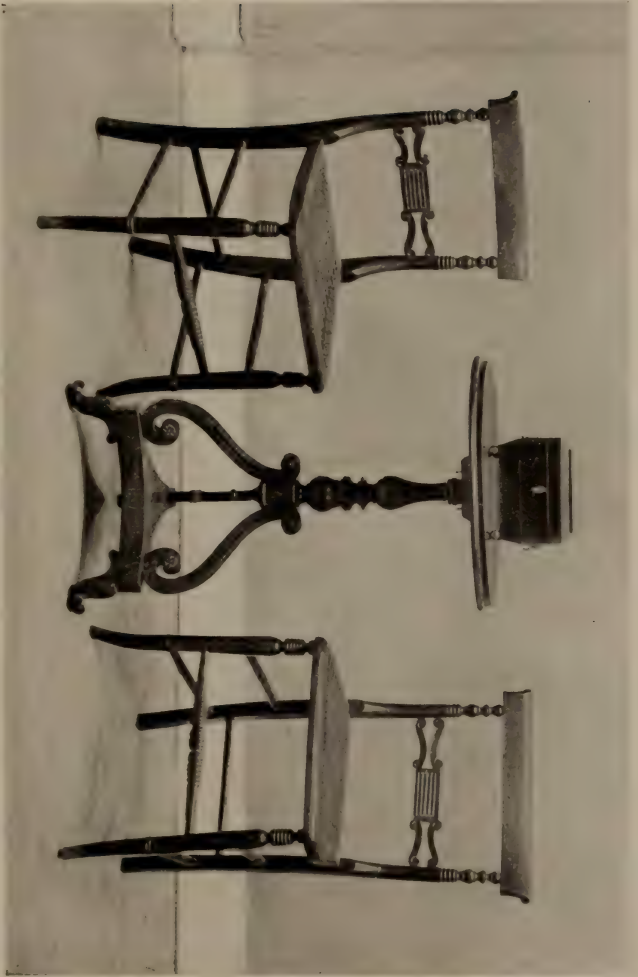
By Courtesy of Howard Reifnyder, Esq., Philadelphia

PLATE 100



DECORATED CHAIRS WITH FINE ADAPTATION OF FRENCH FEATURES
EMPIRE LAMP

By Courtesy of Estate of James Curran, Philadelphia

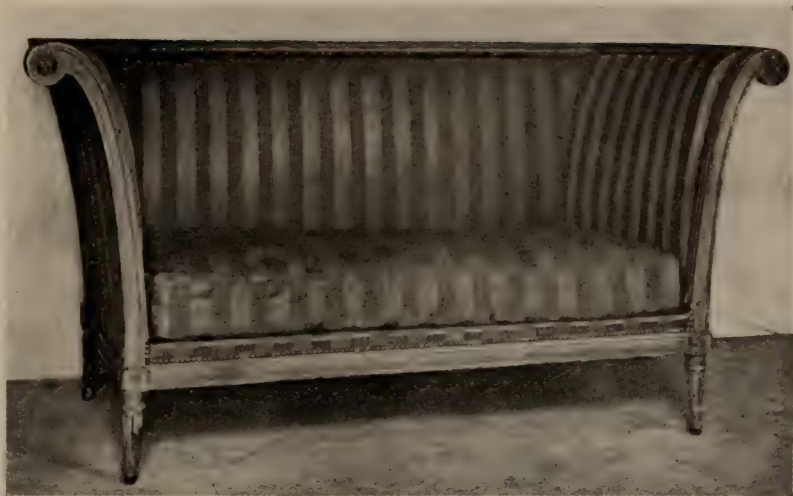


AMERICAN DIRECTOIRE MAHOGANY CHAIRS AND TABLE

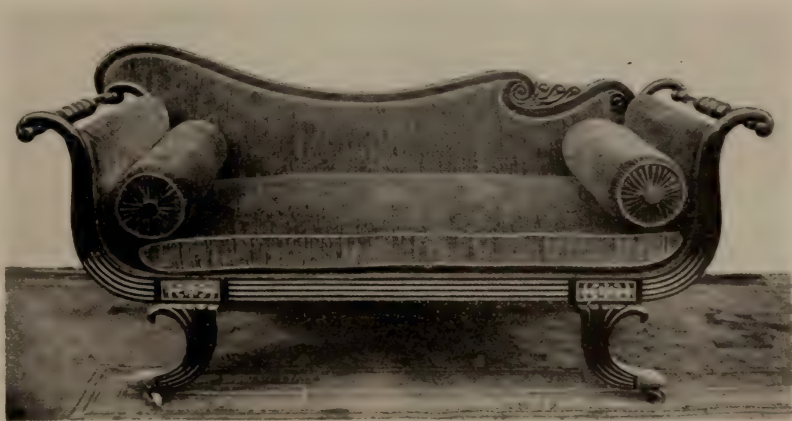
PLATE 102



"LATE SHERATON" CHAIRS AND TABLE WITH END SUPPORTS
By Courtesy of A. F. C. Breman Co., Philadelphia



A. LOUIS XVI *LIT DE REPOS* MADE BY AND STAMPED G. JACOB. FLARE-ARM TYPE
By Courtesy of Edouard Jonas, Paris and New York

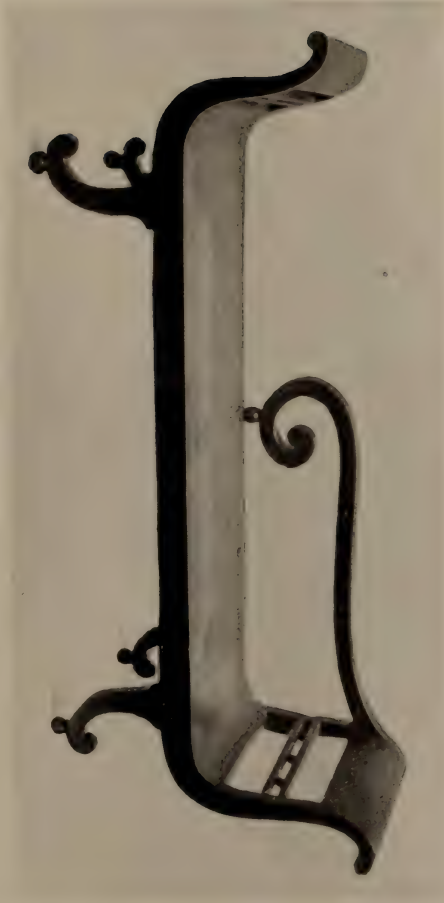


B. ENGLISH *DIRECTOIRE* SOFA, SCROLL-END TYPE
By Courtesy of Frederick Treasure, Preston, England, and New York



Photograph by Dillon

AMERICAN *DIRECTOIRE* SOFA OF FLARE-ARM TYPE, MADE IN PHILADELPHIA
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnyder, Esq., Philadelphia



AMERICAN DIRECTOIRE GRECIAN SOFA, MADE IN THE SOUTH



DUNCAN PHYFE SERPENTINE-BACK SOFA

From the Collection of Alexander M. Hudnut, Esq., Princeton, N. J.
By Courtesy of American Art Association, Inc., New York City

Much beautiful furniture has been constructed through the ages of decoration, but if anything more graceful than these three American pieces has been produced I do not know where to look for it.

In England there were Grecian sofas so close to the American example as to show the source common to both. Sheraton embellished his design by an elaborate ornamentation of acanthus leaves (Plate 109 A) but it is open to anyone to question how long the scroll under the head-rest would endure without breakage. The English sofa shown in Plate 103 B is a trifle "fussy."

And perhaps I may be excused if I prefer the graceful Philadelphia-made roll-arm sofa in Plate 108 to Sheraton's rather stodgy example in Plate 109 B with its huge pedestal feet.

The charmingly curved upholstered back in Phyfe's sofa (Plate 106) is, so far as known, a unique specimen of this treatment. This sofa belonged to the collection of Alexander M. Hudnut, Esq., recently sold by the American Art Association of New York. It came from a mansion at Oyster Bay, L. I., where it had been for about seventy-five years. The sofa with double-lyre arms (Plate 107), a famous piece belonging to Mr. Halsey and loaned by him to the Metropolitan Museum, is one of the finest specimens of Phyfe's work. It will be noted that all the American sofas illustrated here have the graceful "sabre" legs, two of them being finished with brass caps.

Phyfe also adopted the curule form for sofas—either single or double curule according to the length of the sofa. Caned seats and backs were often used.

A characteristic treatment of the back-rail of many of his sofas is that seen in Plate 59, composed of three panels with carved ornaments—the horn-of-plenty, the thunderbolt, drapery-swags, trumpets, wheat-ears,

oak-leaves and laurel were all used. Rarely all three ornaments were alike; usually one of them was selected for the centre panel with another for the side panels. He sometimes used these decorations for the top-rails of chairs and drapery swags on the roll tops of the bedsteads he copied from the type shown in Plate 110 C.

The *quantity* of American *Directoire* furniture made was evidently less than that of the preceding and succeeding styles, but probably much remains in private homes. *Directoire* sofas seem to have been particularly popular in the South: merely to mention a few instances there are, or were a few years ago, examples at Sabine Hall, Carter's Grove, and Brandon, all in Virginia, as well as at Whitby Hall, Philadelphia.

TABLES

The late Sheraton era was profuse in charming small tables, for which pedestals were used of the types illustrated in Plate 110 A. These are of the same character as those appearing in France, but Sheraton might quite as well have derived them from Adam and probably did so. There were, too, dining-tables with multiple pedestals. Sheraton also embraced with avidity the *Directoire* idea of tables with two end-supports, and in his "Cabinet Dictionary" of 1803 gives a number of designs, both with and without bars or stretchers between the two supports. In these supports he uses the lyre form, the curule, columns, and scrolls.

These types were the fashionable tables in London and were produced here by Phyfe and other cabinet-makers. The lid so often employed by Phyfe is seen in his four-support table in Plate 111 and the source from which it derived is shown directly opposite—Plate 110 B. The lion-head drop-ring handle appearing in

this table is that of Sheraton's later period. A number of these tables have the pendants so familiar in French Renaissance furniture.

The lyre is adopted for the other pedestal table—Plate 112. This is a little heavier than some of his other examples and is probably later, showing the forthcoming thickening of the Empire period—of which a mere love of lumber was a prominent characteristic. This table is not an extreme example, but Phyfe in his later days—after 1825—went the way of all others in deterioration. There seems to have been something fatal in the Empire style to everyone who touched it; or else that style was coincident with the lapse of good decorative design.

The sofa-table was another of Phyfe's successes and a fine example appears in Plate 113. Two of Sheraton's pouch-table designs in the "Cabinet Dictionary" (his Plate 65) are very suggestive of this, but, again, Phyfe's work closely resembles existing English examples of the period, one of which I have traced and show in Plate 112 B. Though, owing to the perspective, they are not clearly seen, there are two column supports at each end, as in Phyfe's table.

Charming little tables of *Directoire* type are seen in Plates 101, 102, and at the extreme right of 136. That in Plate 101 is especially delightful. The last was made at Newport, R. I., the source of many attractive examples.

SIDEBOARDS

In his earlier years Phyfe made simple sideboards of the Hepplewhite type but he is also represented by his deep-end sideboards such as that illustrated in Plate 114.

The deep-end sideboard is commonly considered an

American development, but if anyone wishes to see an English example, deeper yet, he will find it in the London *Connoisseur* of July 1924 among the wedding furniture in 1802 of a young woman on the borders of Suffolk.

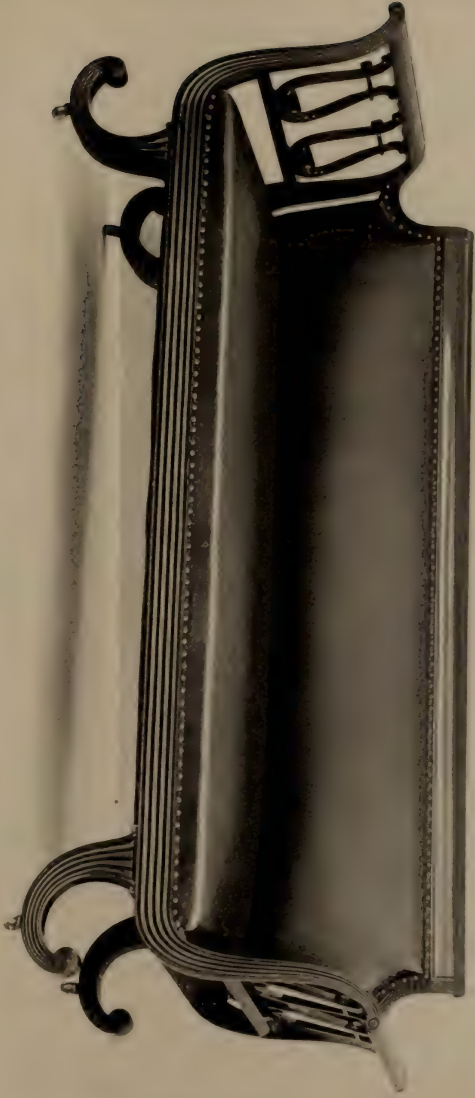
It would appear that British influence in America was not yet dead: it would appear that our craftsmen and their clients of these years were much taken with the new modes, but, when they found such excellent derivations in England, they were content to use either those or the originals, as was at the time most convenient.

All this was entirely to the good, and is one more of the many instances of the solidarity of peoples in the social and mobiliary worlds. Art and the amenities of life draw nations together: it is the inhuman rivalries of trade and politics that cause them—as during this very period—to fly at each others' throats.

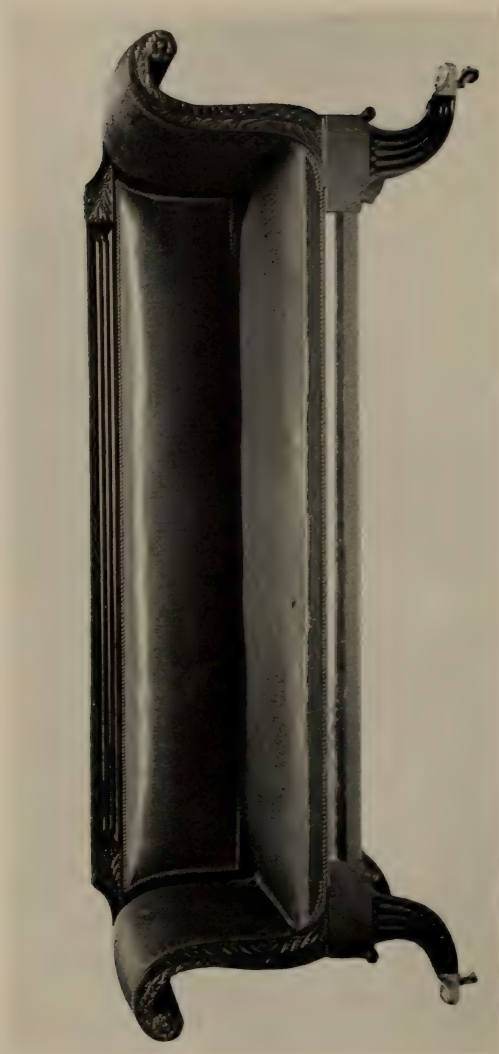
DUNCAN PHYFE

Phyfe worked in the tradition of fine furniture-making and his forms and decorations can be traced to their sources. His chairs seem sufficiently various, and it is rather startling to find on analysis that all are composed of half-a-dozen types of back and half-a-dozen types of leg in various combinations. So far as is known, he made none of those important pieces of cabinet-furniture, secretaries, desks, china closets, chests of drawers, or bookcases.

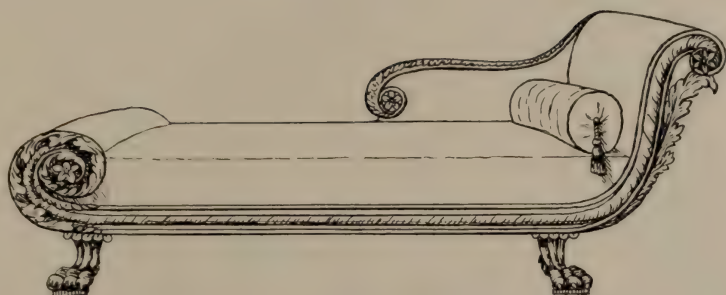
If, then, Phyfe was in no large sense an originator, if his product was rather limited in scope, wherein rests his right to fame? The answer is readily given. Though some of us may much prefer Corot's more vital figure work, everyone is familiar with the Corot landscape. He, too, "worked in the tradition"—his



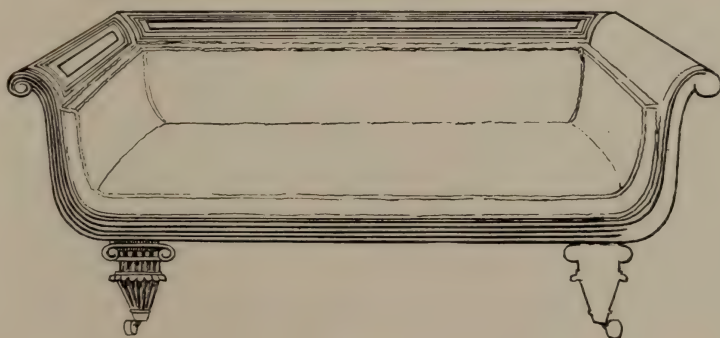
DUNCAN PHYFE LYRE-ARM SOFA
Loaned to the Metropolitan Museum, by R. T. Haines Halsey, Esq., New York City



AMERICAN *DIRECTOIRE* ROLL-ARM SOFA MADE IN PHILADELPHIA
By Courtesy of The Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia



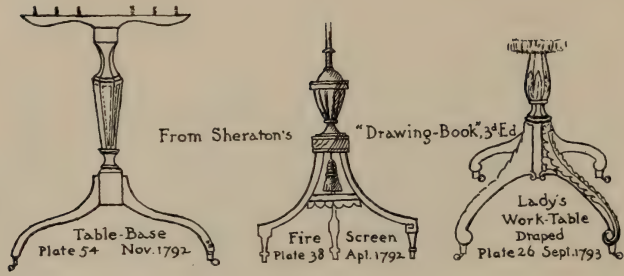
A. GRECIAN SQUAB



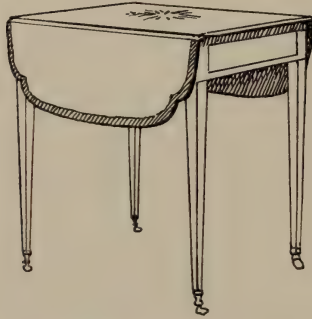
B. GRECIAN SOFA

ENGLISH *DIRECTOIRE* SOFAS
From Sheraton's "Cabinet Dictionary," 1803

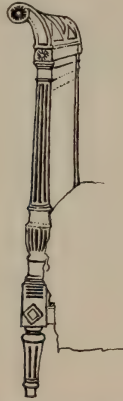
PLATE 110



A. Sheraton Pedestals



B. English Sheraton Pembroke Table with
lid used by Duncan Phyfe
Hatfield Gallery of Antiques, London



C. French *Directoire* Bedstead
of type closely copied by Phyfe

PLATE III



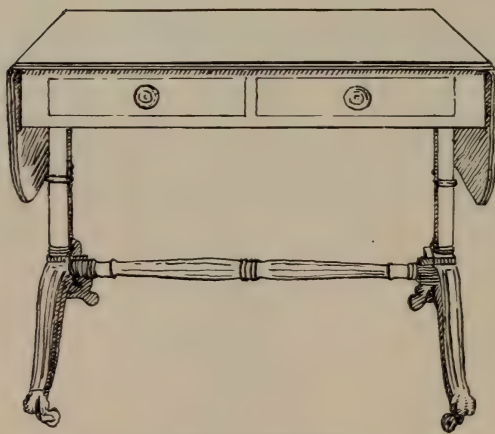
DUNCAN PHYFE FOUR-SUPPORT TABLE WITH LID DERIVED FROM SHERATON

See Plate 110B

By Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum, New York City



A. DUNCAN PHYFE LYRE-SUPPORT PEDESTAL TABLE



B. ENGLISH SOFA-TABLE

By Courtesy of Debenham & Freebody, London
See Plate 113, opposite

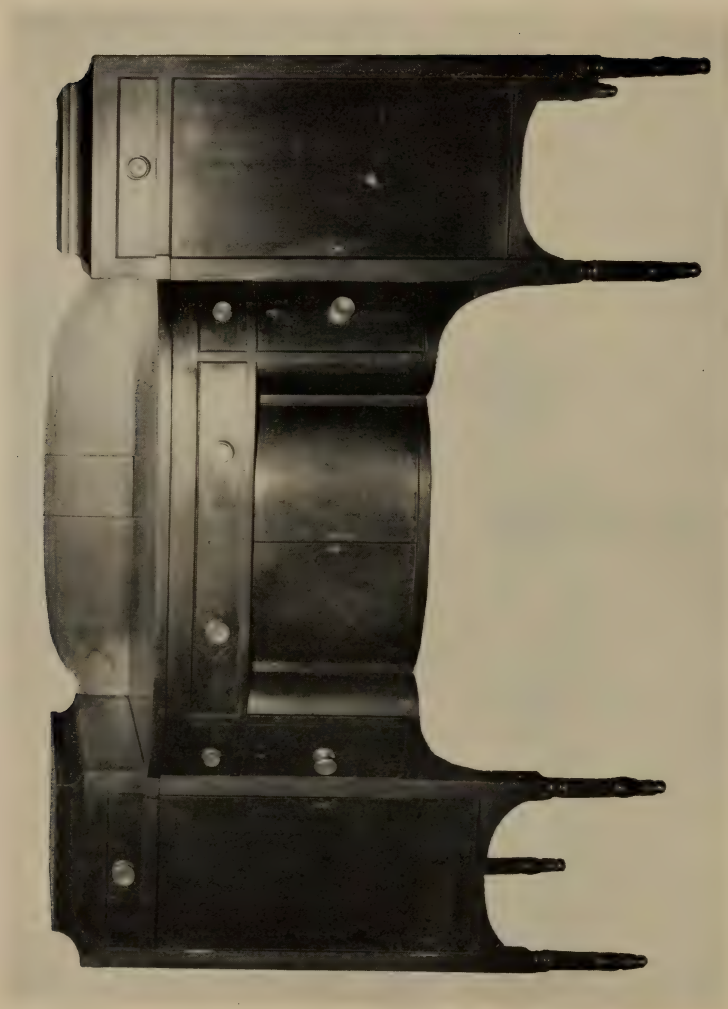


DUNCAN PHYFE SOFA-TABLE WITH DOUBLE-COLUMN END-SUPPORTS

See Plate 112 B

By Courtesy of R. T. Haines Halsey, Esq., New York City

PLATE 114



DUNCAN PHYFE DEEP-END SIDEBOARD
By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York City

methods of painting were not notably different from those of his predecessors. Out of the realm of nature he selected a rather narrow range of subject and effect, carried his work to perfection in his own way, and made that field his own. So, likewise, in furniture, did Duncan Phyfe: his typical work is as recognisable as a Corot landscape. We find in him a sense of proportion both instinctive and trained, a genius for the subtle or the sweeping curve: his work is of great beauty, perfect refinement, and shows meticulous care. In the literal sense of the word Duncan Phyfe was a gentleman, and his furniture was made for gentlefolk.

As will have been seen, Duncan Phyfe by no means stood alone as the only fine cabinet-maker of the period, but as his was an extensive establishment and as his is the best known name in the annals of American furniture-making, a few particulars regarding him may be welcome. For the dates I am indebted to Mr. Cornelius.

Phyfe was born in 1768, 30 miles from Inverness, Scotland, and with his parents came to Albany, New York, in 1783 or 4. As he was then about sixteen years old he worked at his trade, and the style with which he would first have become familiar was that of Hepplewhite. Chippendale had died in 1779 and Phyfe's work shows no reminiscences of the now outmoded style.

After beginning business in Albany, Phyfe came to New York City in the early seventeen-nineties and settled in Partition (now Fulton) Street in 1795. This was the time of the advent of Sheraton in the furniture world and Phyfe showed himself Sheraton's devoted follower, his early work being in that style with some remaining Hepplewhite characteristics. Within a few

years he was making furniture for members of the Astor family and speedily became prominent. He gradually added other houses to his original establishment and is said to have employed more than a hundred workmen. He finally retired in 1847, lived a quiet, comfortable life, and died in 1854 at the age of 86.

THE DATING OF THE PERIOD

As Phyfe occupied a very advantageous position in that he was located in New York, by then advancing in metropolitan prominence, and was working for a select clientèle, it is likely that he was one of the first to adopt the *Directoire* mode. It would, therefore, have been exceedingly interesting to establish the date of his first productions in that vein, and I have bent considerable effort in trying to ascertain this. Mr. Halsey, who has studied Phyfe furniture for thirty years, tells me that he learned "before Phyfe furniture was known, that certain old families in New York had records that certain pieces were made by a cabinet-maker named Phyfe," and so these pieces are documented to that extent. I have not, however, learned of bills or records that would fix the date of his first *Directoire* work.

My own idea is that in general we may date the period as from about 1805 to about 1815. Most of the French furniture being actually constructed during the Consulate, 1799-1804, when order had firmly been reestablished, it is not very probable that the style was taken up here to any considerable extent before 1805, and after the close of the war in 1814 there would certainly have been an influx of Empire tendencies both direct from France and through London.

THE AMERICAN EMPIRE STYLE

A BADLY overworked expression in writing on decoration, and one that has little if any application to the American furniture of previous periods, is the word *influence*. Our craftsmen did not work under the influence of Hepplewhite or another: they as definitely worked *in the style* of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, or Sheraton as did the cabinet-makers of England itself. As we have seen, they often made combinations and innovations, but these were of their own initiative and due to no foreign influence. Even in the *Directoire* period our furniture closely trailed that of France or the English derivations thereof.

But there is now a change. The pieces of American furniture that can be said to be of the style of the French Empire or of the Empire, or Regency, style in England are comparatively few indeed: for the most part American Empire is an inchoate mode composed of survivals from previous periods modified by *influences* and combined with features derived from abroad.

We shall see these as we go on, but it may immediately be mentioned that one of the most noticeable of the influences is *weight*. If we were ignorant of origins we might think, on seeing some of the debased pieces of later years, none of which are illustrated here, that our craftsmen discerned a virtue in mere *avoidsupois*: the truth of course is that Percier and Fontaine, Jacob-Desmalter, and the other *ébénistes* of Napoleon were engaged in providing magnificent and monumental surroundings for their hero, and that bigness, heaviness, and the expanse of large surfaces of handsome ma-

hogany were logical means to the securing of such effects. This is evident in the one piece of furniture illustrated here that is really close to the French Empire style—the large sideboard in Plate 115.

After the really beautiful things of past periods that we have been seeing we may not particularly care for this piece of furniture, but at least we cannot deny that it is handsome and imposing. And compared with some monstrosities later perpetrated it is by no means a bad piece of design. This volume closes at about the year 1825 before many of these debased pieces were made and so we escape their infliction.

The chest of drawers in Plate 116 is quite illuminating as a derivation—showing as it does the adaptations made by our craftsmen. The line-cut accompanying it is a French Empire commode of 1811-13, traced from "Meubles et Objets de Goût" by permission of William Helburn, Inc., and is the nearest to this American example of half a dozen similar pieces in that volume.

The derivation of form is at once evident, but none of these French pieces have the extension running across the *lower* portion of the chest. The metal mounts of the French style have been omitted here and the knobs are of mahogany: it will be noted however that the character of the capitals of the pillars has been retained, notwithstanding the change in material.

One of the greatest losses in our following of the Gallic mode was in the virtual abandonment of the metal mounts of the original style: none of our workmen could have approached the exquisite design and workmanship of the finest examples, but simple ornaments and knobs such as those shown in the tracing should have been within reach of their accomplishment. However, the decadence was even then upon us in America as well as in Europe: great furniture design

was now at its end, and after a hundred years there are no signs of its resurrection. Even in France the metal work was the finest survival—far better in design than most of the furniture to which it was attached. Where metal mounts appear on American furniture they were almost certainly imported and very possibly from Birmingham.

In America not only were design and the sense of proportion failing but our exquisite workmanship was departing with them: carving often becomes coarser and sometimes careless. There are few pieces of which we feel that the work was done for the sheer love of the doing, as in the past. To return to the present example, the proportions of the American piece are much less pleasing than those of the French: nevertheless this is an early and really excellent specimen of the style, being built of beautifully grained mahogany, well made, and with simply turned feet, while many later examples have the cumbersome paw-feet, sometimes awkwardly standing upon their toes. In a number of such chests-of-drawers the top drawers are rounded.

It is probable that pieces of American furniture of definitely Empire style but good qualities date from between the close of the war in 1814 and 1825. Some of the furniture still to be considered may possibly have been made slightly earlier, but it is difficult to determine, as it is of transition character; development varied in different sections, and survivals seem to have been the law of these years rather than the exception.

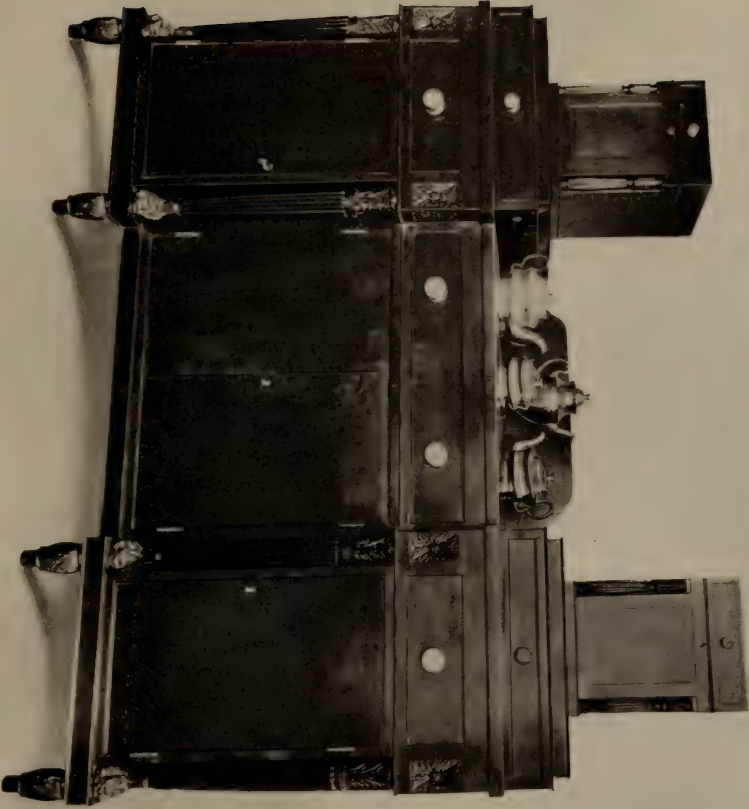
For there is a class of furniture quite different in character from the derivations above treated, and so frequent that several examples are given to illustrate its various phases. It is best exemplified by the beautiful bedstead with tester (Plate 117) and the

pretty little "late Sheraton" sewing-table (Plate 118 A), and it is such furniture that I have mentioned as a modified survival. The sewing-table retains the outstanding leg of the earlier Sheraton period, but it also embodies the features now to be referred to as being especially characteristic of the group. These are the use of the small cluster of acanthus leaves in connexion with either the fluted or spiral-twist column, frequently also accompanied by the pineapple.

No one of these features is new, but the greatly extended use of them and in combination may virtually be considered an American development. As showing the constant migration of decorative *motifs* it is worthwhile to sidetrack a moment to remind the reader that the spiral-twist was in the seventeenth century brought from Indo-China by the Portuguese and from thence spread through Europe. It was introduced into England through the marriage, in 1662, of Charles II to Catherine of Braganza, daughter of the King of Portugal. The pineapple was originally a native of tropical America, though its growth has spread to other continents. As a symbol of hospitality it was used in Georgian times in architecture, upon gateposts, and in silver ware. The acanthus of course goes back to the Greeks and their Corinthian capital.

The thickening of such members as legs and pillars began in France as early as the Consulate (1799) and it is seen in the legs of the sewing-table, which otherwise would be a lovely piece of furniture. The tendency waxed with the years both there and in America.

The chest-of-drawers with rounded front, Plate 119, shows the spiral-twist leg with pineapple top and dates probably between 1814 and 1820; while the bedstead in Plate 121 has the fluted post combined with both the acanthus and the pineapple. This bed-



AMERICAN EMPIRE SIDEBOARD CLOSELY FOLLOWING FRENCH EMPIRE STYLE

By Courtesy of Estate of James Curran, Philadelphia



A. AMERICAN CHEST-OF-DRAWERS
RESEMBLING THE FRENCH STYLE
Property of the Author



B. FRENCH EMPIRE COMMODE OF 1811-13
From "Meubles et Objets de Goût"
By permission of William Helburn, Inc.



BEDSTEAD WITH SPIRAL TWIST AND ACANTHUS POSTS



A. SEWING-TABLE PRESERVING SHERATON
EXTENDED LEGS

By Courtesy of Abbot McClure, Esq.



B. MAHOGANY EMPIRE CHAIR
Mary H. Northend

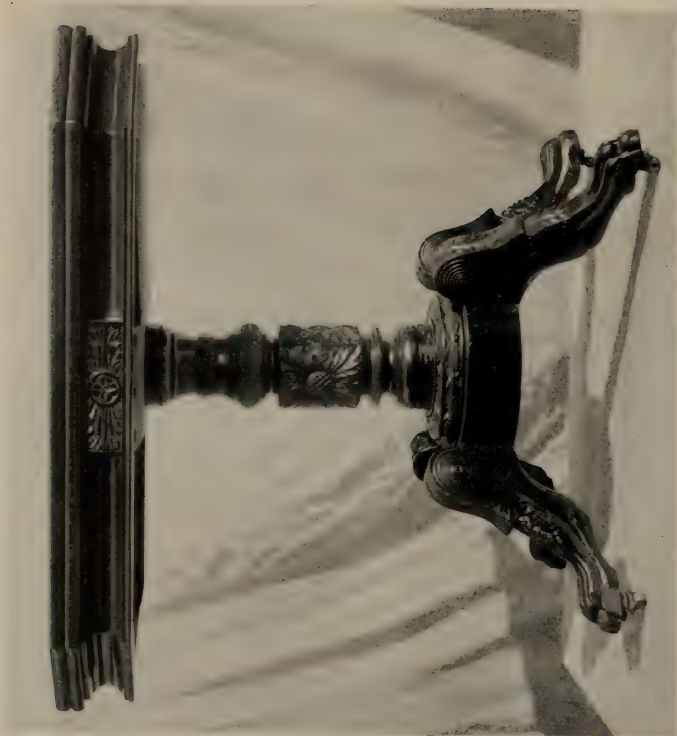


C. "FANCY" EMPIRE CHAIR
Howard Reifsnyder

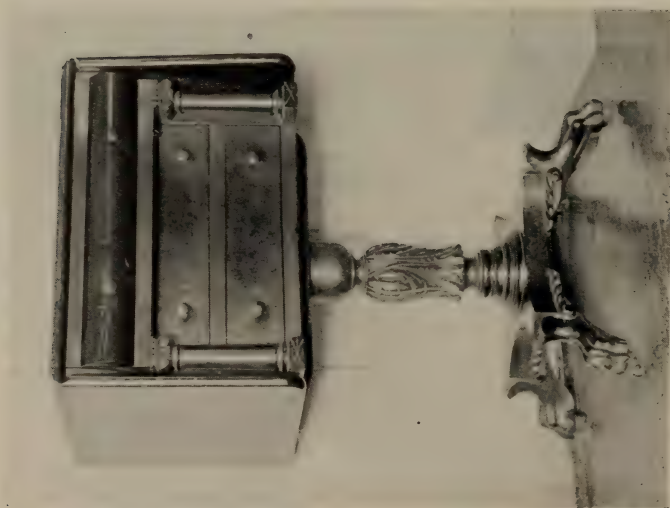


Photograph by the late Mary H. Northend

BOW-FRONT CHEST-OF-DRAWERS AND LATE CHAIRS
Property of Prescott Bigelow, Esq., Boston



B. TYPICAL AMERICAN EMPIRE PEDESTAL-TABLE



A. TYPICAL AMERICAN EMPIRE SEWING-TABLE
Property of Mrs. E. S. Holloway



PINEAPPLE-POST BEDSTEAD WITH THE EARLIER CARRIAGE LEGS

Brett House, Boston

By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend



ACANTHUS-POST BEDSTEAD: A STRICTLY AMERICAN INNOVATION
By Courtesy of Estate of James Curran, Philadelphia

stead is more than a survival: it is distinctly a throw-back in incongruously adding to these the now long-gone-by Chippendale cabriole leg and claw-and-ball foot.

The sofa was an especially notable piece of furniture during these years and many of them are of transitional character, preserving *Directoire* or English Regency features in connexion with Empire size, weight, and detail. Indeed the example in Plate 123 is particularly illustrative of the inchoateness of the style, that I have mentioned, inasmuch as it combines the ornamental contour of the back-rail shown in one of Sheraton's own designs with the *Directoire* roll-over arms, and adds to these the especially awkward Empire feet composed of such harmonious elements as the horn-of-plenty and huge paws! Few of these pieces are an entire delight to the eye but that in Plate 125 is notably virile in its sweeping curves. Mr. George Alfred Cluett has a sofa identical with this except that the feet of his example are composed of eagle heads while these are those of the dolphin. The sofa in Plate 126, belonging to the Hammond Estate, is typical American Empire. The seat alone of this sofa is 8 feet long by 2 feet wide, and its back stands 38 inches from the floor

Typical also of the fully developed style are the two pedestal tables in Plate 120; both excellent pieces of furniture, though the legs of the larger example are lacking in grace of curve.

The bedsteads with acanthus-carved posts, both high and half-high, are an American innovation, and though heavy are handsome—see Plate 122. Most of the good examples are probably anterior to 1820 or 1825.

Mahogany of course remained the chosen wood of

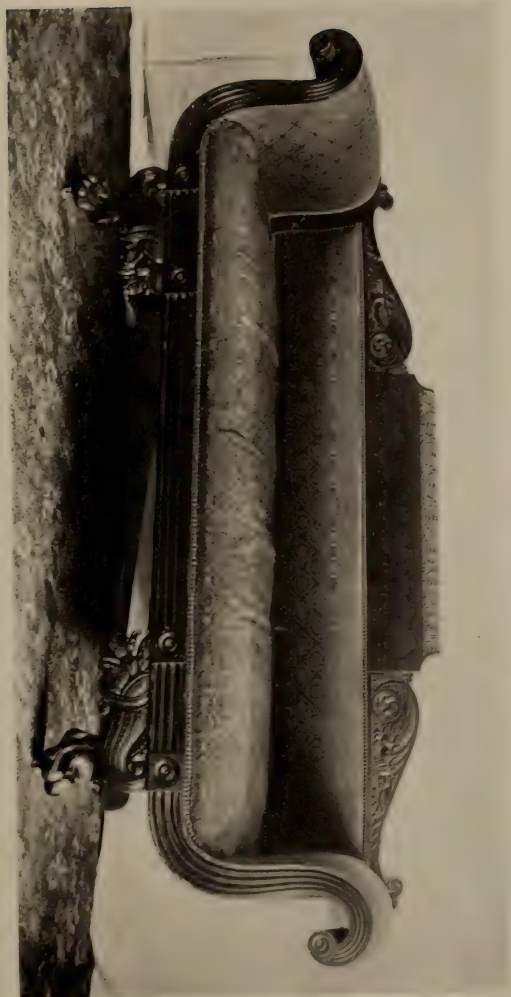
the period—and superb mahogany it was—but there was still a very considerable use of maple.

In chairs the graceful *Directoire* form fortunately persisted here, as it did in France. We also find a development—or rather a deterioration—presently to be touched upon.

Of the *Directoire* form there were many variations. One of them, made in New York and illustrated in Plate 95, because it is of pure *Directoire* contour, may possibly be of these years as it has the American eagle carved in the back. This symbol had been adopted considerably earlier, but especially after the close of the war in 1814 this and other emblems of triumph and prosperity overflowed into all household goods. For throughout those years we were terrifically, noisily, patriotic. This sentiment blossomed forth in every conceivable fashion—in toasts at social gatherings, in pictures, furniture, pottery, and draperies—even to bed-spreads! Sometimes I wonder if the “cockiness” which those of other nations remark and resent in the American bearing is not the result of this overdose of “national consciousness.”

But let us hie back from this debatable theme to that of furniture—in itself quite sufficiently debatable without encouraging flights in other directions.

An attractive example of the persisting *Directoire* form of chair, recently seen, has a middle back-piece composed of a central shell flanked by entwined dolphins at each side. The decorated or “fancy” chair illustrated in Plate 118 C preserves the *Directoire* curves of back and the overhanging top-rail. The latter continually occurs and, as in this instance, is usually curved inward to afford greater comfort. The painted “fancy” chair was very popular during these



AMERICAN EMPIRE SOFA WITH SURVIVING SHERATON BACK AND DIRECTOIRE ARMS
By Courtesy of the late Mary H. Northend



AMERICAN EMPIRE SOFA PRESERVING *DIRECTOIRE* CHARACTERISTICS



AMERICAN EMPIRE SOFA
From Beverly Farms, Massachusetts



A TYPICAL AMERICAN EMPIRE SOFA OF GREAT SIZE AND WEIGHT

Seat 8 ft. x 2 ft. Height of back 38 inches

By Courtesy of Estate Mary V. Hammond, Frederick County, Maryland

and later years and there are many pleasing examples. The Hitchcock chair is particularly well known.

An example of the American Empire chair previously referred to is shown in the bedroom of the Brett house in Plate 121. It is interesting as showing a departure. During the Chippendale period the cabriole leg was set diagonally to the piece—as it is in the accompanying bedstead. Then Chippendale re-introduced the straight leg, and it was employed throughout the Hepplewhite-Sheraton régime. During the *Directoire* period the curved leg again came into vogue, but the curve began at the top of the seat rail. Now we find its commencement *below* the seat, and it is again truly a cabriole leg, but flat on the sides and set flush with the side-rails and not diagonally. How interesting are the changes from style to style—and how little they are observed! It will be noted, too, that the back-splat—absent for so many years—has returned with the leg; but, again, with some difference in form.

A side chair that I have just seen is most interesting in that it is wholly of *Directoire* form while between the top and middle back-rails appears a very diminutive splat of this American Empire type. It is therefore a transition piece and probably marks the very beginning of the revived use of the splat.

A chair very similar to that in Plate 121 but with a different back-rail is seen in Plate 118 B. These specimens are not unattractive and have a quaintness and homelike feeling of their own, but the declension in grace of design between them and the pure *Directoire* contour illustrated in the previous chapter is but too evident. What that declension could really accomplish, however, scarcely needs other exemplifications than the pair of chairs accompanying the chest-of-drawers

in the opposite illustration—Plate 119: they show the saddening decadence which set in in all the decorative arts.

Such a downfall is of no small moment to the human race: it goes deeper than is realised by those who are not continually concerning themselves with beauty and its effect upon mankind. "The arts"—said Rev. Dr. Bernard Iddings Bell recently in the *Atlantic Monthly*—"The arts—those activities whereby man would clamber from the beasts to fly among the gods."

Fortunately we shall see further manifestations of the art-spirit in America, for though these chapters on furniture have reached their conclusion they are followed by two others—those on the interior architecture of the various periods and the accessories therewith employed.

DECORATION

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE
DECORATIVE ACCESSORIES



INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE—COLONIAL AND FEDERAL

IT MAY as well frankly be granted that modern conditions confronting us often render the carrying out of a strictly historic interior difficult or impossible. The introduction of suitable panelling, mantels, and the like in rented houses or apartments is not always practicable: a house may be purchased of which we feel the interior to be sufficiently appropriate without adding to its initial cost the expense of extensive changes.

In such cases one should at least follow the spirit of our historic decoration, though we may not be able to follow the letter. If we avoid incongruous elements, we may very well do with plastered, papered, or painted walls, and simple door- and window-trims.

If a but moderate outlay be contemplated, much may be accomplished through the applying of simple mouldings over canvas, a dado, or the introduction of a chair-rail to a plain plastered wall, according to the period to be carried out in walls and furnishing.

For, contrary to the too usual misconception, there existed in the domestic architecture of America, during the two centuries from its settlement to 1825, several overlapping, but nevertheless distinct styles, to the characteristics of which we must give due heed.

Not all those who have a fair knowledge of American furniture realise the importance of its architectural setting. On the other hand too great purism is inadvisable; for we do not always consider how comparatively few *strictly* period interiors can have existed in any past period. An example would be an edifice

newly erected and newly decorated and furnished all in the best and very latest manner of that particular year. Colour, draperies, and accessories would be in complete accord. Every age would of course have afforded some such examples, but what a small numerical relation would they bear to the residences of like class thereabouts. Even in those cases where the furnishings were entirely new, the interior architecture, if in good condition and not too greatly outmoded, would frequently remain unchanged. Throughout the history of decoration transitions from one style to another were very gradual and the older mode invariably overlapped the new. There were always important, fashionable houses introducing the latest developments, these new features gradually being embodied in succeeding buildings.

With due regard to the limits of a convenient volume scarcely more can be done here than furnish a handy sketch of the styles and changes most interesting to the general reader, without attempting to cover all features or their many variations; and in general this can best be done by illustrating and commenting upon a few rooms from notable houses among those that helped "set the pace" for less ambitious homes. For such houses were the more perfect of their kind and embodied the ideal toward which others strove.

BEFORE 1700

When houses evolved from the primitive shelter into the more or less comfortable abode, the more usual finish of the interior was in New England a sheathing of broad boards grooved together, perhaps more usually set perpendicularly but frequently horizontally. Adopted in that severe climate primarily for purposes of warmth, it is, though a severely simple,

a not unattractive finish, and is often reproduced to-day. When this is done, it of course should be accompanied by correspondingly simple furniture of its time. This sheathing was also employed for the partitions between the rooms, and such doors as remain extant were similarly constructed and studded with wrought-iron nails. Sometimes clay plaster took the place of sheathing. The windows of good houses were lead casements, sometimes with transoms, and usually in ranges of two or more windows. It is not generally realised that glass was a comparatively scarce commodity even in England in the early seventeenth century, and until its middle years oiled paper was not infrequently used throughout the colonies, especially in the poorer houses. Some windows were furnished with shutters instead of sash. The great fireplaces were exceedingly simple, and the beams of the ceiling commonly appeared.

In the middle and Southern colonies plastering of the inside of the outer walls was the rule, but the inner walls seem generally to have been frame partitions.

1700-1776

Massachusetts and Connecticut were very conservative and the above features often there persisted during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. When panelling was introduced it was at first likely to retain features of the Queen Anne style rather than at once to adopt the Georgian mode. But the beginning of the century marks the gradual transition to panelled walls and double-hung sash in the wealthier and more progressive sections of New England, such as Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and in the middle and Southern colonies. Nevertheless, leaded casements

persisted in some instances even through the eighteenth century.

Following the introduction of the mode of Inigo Jones and Wren in England (a style decidedly classic though with some Baroque tendencies) the development in interior finish in America was surprisingly rapid, so that by 1722 we find such interiors as that of Graeme Park illustrated in Plate 127. By 1730 there existed in Virginia and Pennsylvania interiors very similar to that at Ratcliffe Manor, near Easton, Maryland, illustrated in Plate 128. This is shown as an especially charming example, which, though not built until 1749, follows the general style of earlier houses in more advanced locations. Graeme Park was erected by Sir William Keith, the Governor of Penn's colony, notable as one such Governor who was popular with the people—and hence not with the Proprietaries, by whom he was finally deposed. This seat is located at Horsham, about nineteen miles from Philadelphia, and when Sir William drove to the city "he made the journey with his coach-and-four in truly regal fashion."

Between say 1722 and 1730 there was an abandonment of this bolder, heavier Queen Anne type in favour of one of greater refinement, and from this time on there was a constant development and organisation of this new mode, and what that mode was and how that development occurred should properly be understood. It was simply the transfer to America of the English architectural style of the Georges, and is properly, therefore, termed the Georgian style. Just as our cabinet-makers were working in the English mode, so were our builders. And this occurred in each case through the same means. Workmen in both branches came from England but during this period the greatest infiltration of adequate knowledge of the styles undoubtedly came

through *books*. The number of architectural works, both elaborate and in the shape of smaller handbooks, was large, and some of them ran through repeated editions. Because of our need of guidance, most of these found their way here quickly, and their use by builders was universal. A natural result of the same knowledge circulating throughout the colonies was a quite uniform development of our domestic architecture, varied somewhat in expression, it is true, by local conditions and climate. The South Carolina house differed in plan from that of Pennsylvania, and that of Pennsylvania varied somewhat from that of New England, but nevertheless as a whole we find consistency of style.

Architecture and furniture usually march together, but before 1760 we have the unusual spectacle of this classic phase of interior architecture accompanied by the Dutch Baroque furniture of the Queen Anne-Early Georgian mode, and after 1760 by that of Chippendale. The "Architects Furniture" of early Georgian years was, as we have seen, an attempt to turn furniture in the classic direction.

It was however but partial and certain classes of furniture only were affected: any move in this direction speedily ceased under the influence of Chippendale, not at all a classicist; so that it was not until the adoption of the Hepplewhite and Sheraton styles, after the Revolution here, that furniture was brought into accord with architecture.

During the Chippendale period the current fashionable French influence introduced into this generally classic architecture many Rococo features. The volume most potent in this direction was Abraham Swan's "British Architect," published in London in 1745, circulating here, and printed in an American edition in Philadelphia in 1775. These Rococo features appear

as far south as in the notable home of Miles Brewton in Charleston.

As the Chippendale style of furniture had its highest development in Philadelphia no interior could be more appropriate, as showing its architectural setting, than Mt. Pleasant, Fairmount Park, built soon after 1761 and later owned by Benedict Arnold. Close indeed is the kinship, for the ornament in the upper portion of the overmantel of this state-chamber (Plate 129, reproduced by permission of H. Ferdinand Beidleman) is the Chippendale Rococo of the furniture and likely carved by one of those to whom we owe the beautiful work of the chairs, tables, and highboys we have seen. It will be noted, too, that there again appear the flower rosettes to which attention was called.

Beautiful as was their architecture even these most "advanced" houses offered few of the conveniences of living that we enjoy today. Each floor usually contained but four rooms with a large hallway. We all know the outside appearance of the usual pre-Revolution house—a central doorway flanked by two windows at each side on the first floor and a range of five uniform flat-headed windows above. The Palladian window (arched centre with two flat-headed narrower side-lights) occurred, particularly on stairways. There are Palladian windows in this house above the central doorway on both fronts. As we are taking this illustration as a text, it will be seen that the window to the right, in common with numbers of others throughout the country, has panelled inside folding shutters.

At Mt. Pleasant there are two separate dependencies or outbuildings, and these contained the kitchen and offices. In most houses the kitchen was in the basement. No matter how well covered, food that was



DRAWING-ROOM AT GRAEME PARK, HORSHAM TOWNSHIP, NEAR PHILADELPHIA, 1722.

Queen Anne Type appearing later than in England
By Courtesy of H. Ferdinand Beidleman



THE CAPTAIN COOK ROOM AT THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM, MEMORIAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA
Captain Cook wall-paper by Joseph Dufour, Paris. Adam mantel by Wellford, Philadelphia, C. 1810



THE PARLOR AT KENMORE, NEAR FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA. BUILT BEFORE 1775
Stucco walls, mantel and ceiling
Photograph by The Cook Studio, Richmond, Virginia



A. Doorway in Georgian Style



B. Doorway with Adam Characteristics

DOORWAYS AT WHITEHALL, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND

By Courtesy of John Martin Hammond, Esq.



AN ADAM MANTEL AT THE LILACS, FAIRMOUNT PARK, PHILADELPHIA

By Courtesy of H. Ferdinand Beidleman



INTERIOR OF THE JOHN C. STEVENS HOUSE, NEW YORK CITY. CLASSIC REVIVAL, C. 1830
From the original water-colour drawing by Alexander Jackson Davis in the possession of the New York Historical Society

“piping-hot” can scarcely have been usual at Mt. Pleasant.

In this and many other houses various arrangements were now used for doing away with the great stairway in the central hall—here it was banished to a compartment at the side.

Earlier in the century, as in England, the fully panelled wall was the ideal; though, for the saving of expense, some walls were frequently left plain except on the fire-place side in less important houses or in the less public rooms. But it was for no such reason that we see the plain wall with dado at Mt. Pleasant. It is in itself an indication that the use of panelling was now on the decrease. This was not yet invariable, however, as is shown by one of the finest interiors in the whole country—that of the Brewton house, 1765–69, previously referred to, with full architectural treatment throughout the drawing-rooms, which extend along the entire second-story front. This custom of placing important rooms on the second floor was quite common in the South and was later adopted in such fashionable Northern residences as the Bingham house in Philadelphia, built before 1788.

Where panels remained they were large, those on the side walls usually extending from dado to ceiling. Light tints of colour were used as well as white.

Because of the importance of the “hearth” in home life the fire-place wall was given the most elaborate treatment. Imported mantels were frequently used and these were without shelf. These mantels, as also doorways, window-casings, and overmantels, were commonly dog-eared. The overmantels consisted of a central panel, for mirror or painting, surrounded by an architrave, as at Mt. Pleasant. There might be pilasters at the sides, or the overmantel might be

topped with a broken pediment of the character shown over the side-cupboards here. The cornice was of good weight and the dado was retained even when the field of the wall above was plain. The handsome acanthus consoles will be noted.

The letter of Thomas Hancock of Boston ordering wall-paper from London in January 1737-8 is well known. The use of this wall-covering remained infrequent at first, but grew in favour, and especially after 1760 became extremely fashionable. The handsome scenic and other papers, particularly those of France, made a wide appeal (see Plate 130). Miss McClelland in her "Historic Wall-Papers" tells us that in 1769 Plunket Fleeson of Philadelphia announces "American Paper Hangings, manufactured in Philadelphia, of all kinds and colours, not inferior to those generally imported and as low in price."

This new fashion in wall-treatment was doubtless largely responsible for the disuse of panelling, though even when it was discontinued many walls remained plain.

Textiles were used for wall-coverings with sufficient frequency to be advertised for this purpose. Light blue silk was employed in the Richard Derby house, Boston, previous to 1825.

But anterior to the Revolution we also find a very different type of interior—that illustrated by Kenmore, near Fredericksburg, Virginia, the home of Betty Lewis, the sister of Washington (Plate 131). A similar style prevailed at Mt. Vernon. Both these houses were previous to 1775. At Kenmore, walls, ceiling, and mantel are all of stucco, and it will be noticed that the ceiling is *not* Rococo, against which a reaction was now being felt. The dog-ear still prevails in mantel and overmantel, and we also see the panelled inside

shutter. The dado is plain. Notice the mantel: there is not yet the later widely projecting shelf, but room is found upon the end-blocks for two small ornaments.

We can well imagine the beauty and attraction such interiors must have presented when they were the scenes of the social life of the period.

THE ADAM INFLUENCE

And now a transition. In the fine old mansion of Whitehall, Maryland, are the two doorways illustrated in Plate 132: one of these with the triangular pediment and fluted pilasters is of the type we have been reviewing; the other shows the beginnings of Adam influence. We must so speak of it, for in America it made itself felt more in the way of a modification of the Georgian style than by wholesale adoption as an entity.

Whitehall was the home of the Colonial governor of Maryland, Horatio Sharpe, who has been debited with first suggesting the stamp-act. Mr. John Martin Hammond (to whom I am indebted for the use of the photographs) in his "Colonial Mansions of Maryland and Delaware" tells us that the superb woodwork of this house was all the work of a young redemptioner who was offered his freedom if he would decorate Whitehall. Pathetically, upon the completion of his task he was stricken by sudden illness and died. The date is not given, but as the governor returned to England in 1790 it was anterior to that year. The house itself was built before 1763.

There is an important difference here to be noted. The interior architecture of the Queen Anne and Georgian style has been referred to as classic: and so it was; but it was the classicism of the Renaissance, filtered through Inigo Jones, Wren, and others. Now there is a direct return to antiquity itself.

The conception of classicism formed by Robert Adam was, as has been mentioned in the Furniture section, based upon four years' study of architectural remains upon the Continent, particularly those of Pompeii and Spalato. His views—either temperamental or influenced by the volume by Andrea Coner—were that for modern domestic architecture the classic proportions should be attenuated. *Slenderness* is, then, one of his distinguishing features, and we have already noted his tremendous influence upon furniture in the routing of the style of Chippendale and in the slender classic forms of his followers, Hepplewhite and Sheraton. In the Whitehall doorway we see, throughout, the influence of his great refinement as well as several of his favourite classic ornaments—the Greek anthemion and the egg-and-dart and bead-and-reel mouldings. The ears are retained here, but they were soon abandoned.

Wall-papers were still used, such as the famous Captain Cook paper in the Pennsylvania Museum (Plate 130) seen there in connexion with an Adam mantel ornamented by Wellford, Philadelphia, about 1810, and an imported Adam mirror and sconces. Many walls were of plain plaster but preserving the dado top-rail.

Under the Adam influence, from 1780 onwards, numerous changes took place. One of the greatest of these was in the direction of convenience and, in consequence, comfort. Though there was an abundance of it in the furniture of the eighteenth century, only now did convenience make itself manifest in American homes. Adequate heating and lighting were not known much in advance of our own days.

First in the procession of changes came a greater number of rooms, and often variety in their shapes.

For social purposes the circular or the elliptical Adam drawing-room made its appearance. Woodlands, Philadelphia, was the leader in a number of innovations: as remodelled in 1788 it contained not only elliptical rooms but a classic circular vestibule with eight columns and intervening niches as well as a domed ceiling.

Mantels are particularly indicative of the Adam style, for doorways and window-casings followed them in their general characteristics, emphasis being laid upon these necessary architectural features, with the plain or papered wall as a relief. One of the finest of these composition mantels is that at The Lilacs, a quite small house in West Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, illustrated by the courtesy of Mr. Beidleman in Plate 133. Both in this mantel and that in the Captain Cook room there are columns at the ends, these being surmounted by blocks extending through the entablature to the shelf. Doorways usually had these end-blocks, but the side-casings were often like those at Whitehall. Nor did the mantels themselves by any means always have columns—flat, panelled or fluted pilasters were very common. And we find these mantels both with and without overmantels of Adam form and decoration, those without being the norm.

In short, in the many varied adaptations of the style in America it made itself most manifest in attenuation and in character of ornament. There were even such survivals as in the Pierce (Nichols) house at Salem, Massachusetts, where no less a man than Samuel McIntire carried out in the East Parlour the full architectural treatment of the earlier style but in the Adam manner.

When Palladian windows remained they were usually simplified, but we now find arched windows, and from about 1810, those with which many apart-

ment-houses have made us familiar, triple flat-headed windows, those at the sides being narrower than that at the centre. The sash-bars were now made lighter, and sometimes the sills were at the floor.

THE CLASSIC REVIVAL

The Classic Revival may be treated briefly here, for, though its inception was much earlier, the Greek phase did not get into full swing in domestic architecture till about 1825. It would seem that ripening circumstances had occurred some years before this and the delay in fruition is somewhat puzzling. As America was the first great republic to be established in modern times it was rather natural for us to look back to and in a measure identify ourselves with the Republic of Rome. France took the same attitude in the seventeen-nineties. The "back to antiquity" movement was everywhere in the air. Jefferson was the American pioneer, in his sketch for remodelling the Governor's house at Williamsburg, about 1779. He adhered to Roman forms but others travelled back still further and adopted the Greek order. The Thaddeus Burr house at Fairfield, Connecticut, the first known example of its employment in domestic architecture, was built as early as 1790. But there, for a time, the Greek movement hesitated.

To review, then, the Classic Revival began with Adam, continued through the Regency or Greco-Roman phase till about 1815, at which time it began to be supplanted by the heaviness of the Greek forms.

From 1800 onward this influence had had effect, and especially in public buildings, but some years elapsed before its widespread adoption in dwellings occurred. Our sympathies with the Greek struggle for independence (1821-27) turned this incipient movement into

a craze, and till 1850 Greek Revival architecture swept the then-existing country.

No other such complete statement of an interior of this style is known as the architect's own water-colour drawing of the drawing-rooms of the John C. Stevens house, New York City, of about 1830, preserved in the New York Historical Society and here reproduced in Plate 134. The entire wall surface is plain and painted grey. The entablature is carried around the rooms, the notable architectural feature being the double screen between, with its Ionic columns from the floor. The mantel is of *Directoire* style and of white marble with bronze mounts. The console-table is likewise of marble and of Roman design, with tripod and urn of bronze and gold surmounting it.

The accessories of this interior will be described, with those of the earlier periods, in the next and final section of this volume.

DECORATIVE ACCESSORIES

IN CONSIDERING the decoration of the American interior the use of our knowledge of conditions will go far toward sparing us a vast amount of detail and what might afford us a number of uncomfortable, because puzzling, surprises. Indeed how otherwise would it be possible to treat within reasonable limits of the decoration of two centuries with all their varieties of circumstance!

On the one hand we have already seen that our settlement was accomplished often with the greatest hardship. To the pioneers who pushed out into the wilderness life remained difficult and isolation from the centres was almost complete. With such families, and frequently with those of small means in the settlements themselves, decoration would depend almost entirely upon home industry—the loving handiwork of wife and daughters in weaving, dyeing, and many other household arts.

But then how is it that as early as the sixteenth-fifties we read in inventories of damasks, velvets, needlework, turkey-work, cushions, India fabrics, elaborate bed-draperies, fine silverware and china-ware!

The fact of course is that in the larger seaboard centres very early were to be found a few families of means and taste who insisted upon having in the new land that to which they had been accustomed in the old; and, with these, others who speedily prospered and so were able to indulge in the amenities or even the luxuries of life.

And, naturally, there were several grades of comfort between these two classes.

If we remember that decoration is always and everywhere governed by degree of means, knowledge, taste, and the then existing supply we can quite approximately say in what any special decoration consists.

Though intercourse with England was slow it was constant, and it was perfectly possible to bring over any decorative materials that might be ordered by the householder or by the dealer. And advertisements show the energy of the merchant and his pride in keeping up with London fashion.

The goods current in each English period are, then, the index of what a little later might be found in prosperous households here. So we must bear in mind certain developments from time to time. The tall clock-case, for example, was first constructed in the eighteenth century as a protection to the swinging pendulum then first introduced.

Silversmiths arrived here almost as early as cabinet-makers, and so most of our silver was American; but makers of chinaware and glassware were few and late, and therefore our supply was in the early periods entirely derived from abroad and in the later years largely so.

The East India painted cotton fabrics, bright with birds and flowers, and often imitated by European manufacturers, were very popular here as well as abroad during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These, with other textiles previously referred to, the floor-coverings to be mentioned, and embroidered pictures and samplers added strong notes of colour to our early interiors.

The decorative situation in general is very well

indicated by the matter of floor-coverings. Those earliest in use were, naturally, of home manufacture. Rag woven and braided rugs were the more popular in the middle colonies and hooked-rugs in New England, but none of these was exclusive to one section. The art of making hooked-rugs was brought from England by the colonists: these are one of the most interesting of our home productions and good specimens are much appreciated to-day.

We might be sure, however, that with prosperity and the emulation of English modes, especially in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the floor-coverings of the better houses would be European carpets—and so the records tell us. In the familiar account by Henry Wansey of the drawing-room of the Bingham house in Philadelphia in 1794, as but one instance, he writes: “the carpet one of Moore’s most expensive patterns.”

Nevertheless, the making and the use of the hand-made rug continued. They were decorative and durable, and our ancestors took pride in their handiwork. The foreign product appeared in the important rooms of fashionable houses, but even there some of the simpler bedrooms would very likely contain home-made rugs: and in the greater number of abodes they would remain the principal floor-coverings.

But there were changes and developments. The earlier designs of hooked-rugs were of geometrical pattern; later, flower or leaf designs were added to these; and by the middle of the eighteenth century very attractive flower-designs were usual. In the nineteenth century birds and beasts appeared. Naturally the designs and colourings vary greatly in merit, being entirely dependent upon the taste of the maker.

From the result itself we cannot doubt that some of the finer specimens of later periods owe their inspiration to imported textiles and Aubusson or other foreign carpets.

A few needlework carpets, in woolen yarn on canvas ground, were also made here.

As wealth and facilities increased the scale of living developed accordingly, and so we see that the decoration prevailing in the better houses from the beginning of the Chippendale period to 1825 was anticipated, save as regards stylistic changes, by the wealthy in earlier days and emulated at all times by those of lesser means. We cannot then do better than review, a little later, what then obtained—always bearing in mind, however, these changes in circumstances and style.

As to the former we should remember that mirror-glass, for instance, was not made in England itself till 1673, though there had been importations from Italy before that time. Mirrors in the colonies were therefore exceedingly scarce in early days.

As to their style, mirrors are of such importance in decoration that we may here run over their principal varieties. The typical contours of those of the first periods are shown in the line drawings herewith.

The earliest examples of Stuart style—the last quarter of the seventeenth century here—were doubtless imported from England. The frames were wide, and nearing the square in shape, with a top extension of varying design but virtually always of semi-circular form. These persisted into the William and Mary period and in that reign in England were largely of marqueterie.

Those of Anne (first quarter of the eighteenth century) were of very different proportion, being tall

and narrow. Though there was much variation in the heading it was so characteristic as always to be recognisable from the typical outline given here.



Stuart and William and Mary



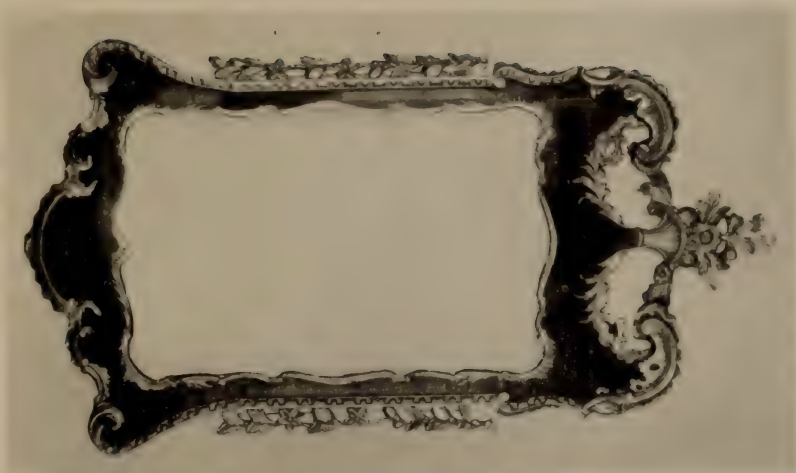
Queen Anne

TYPICAL CONTOURS OF EARLY MIRRORS

A particularly fine walnut and gilt mirror appears in Plate 135 A. Of generally Georgian type its upper and lower decoration is Rococo, and the basket of flowers is close in style to the acroterium ornament of the Chippendale case-pieces we have seen. This mirror belonged to Noah Webster of Dictionary fame and was purchased from his descendants near Middletown, Connecticut.

The silhouette or cut-out type illustrated in Plate 135 B was current throughout the Chippendale period in America.

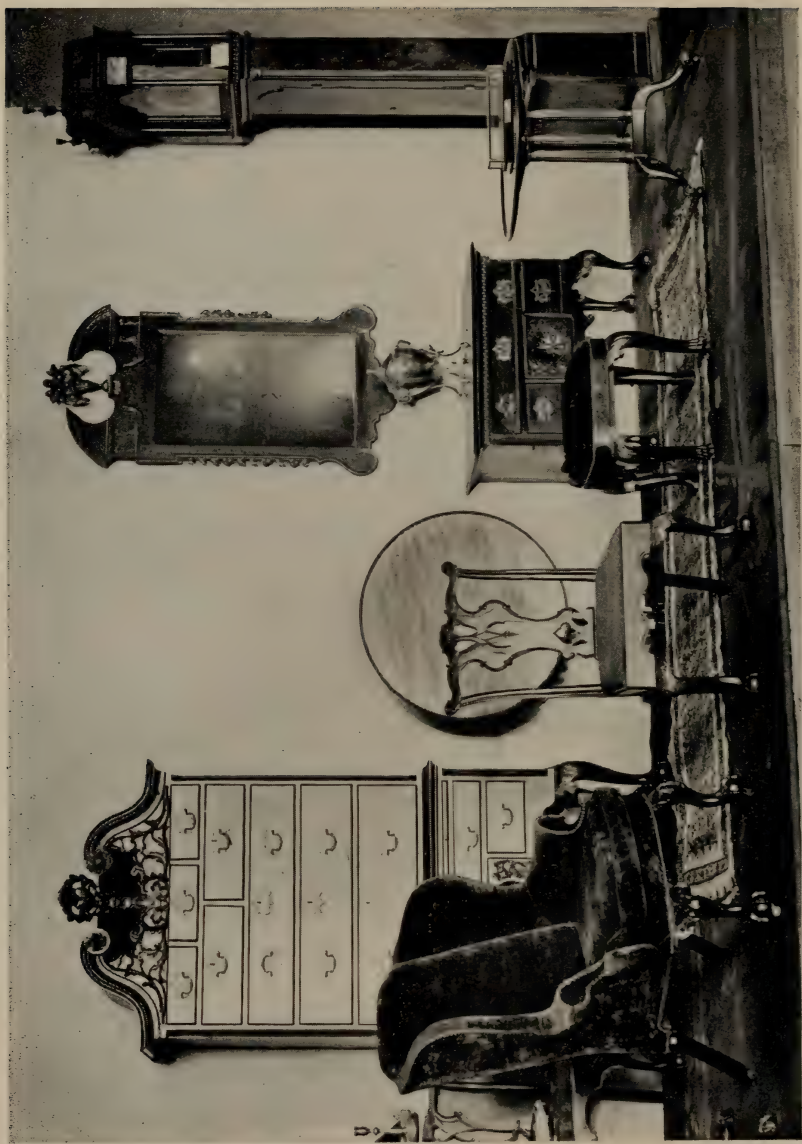
Its Philadelphia maker landed in 1753, and his first advertisement appeared in 1756. His earliest productions were quite decidedly Anne in contour. He then took up simpler versions of the mirror illustrated and, as will be seen by the date of the present



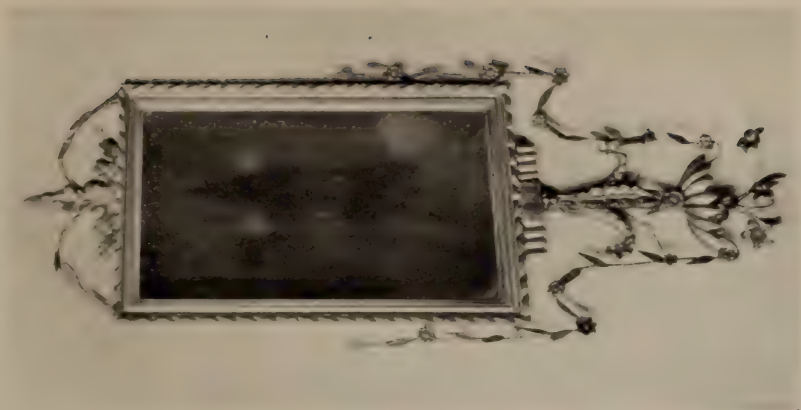
A. WALNUT AND GILT MIRROR, c. 1750-65
By Courtesy of Charles Woolsey Lyon, Inc., New York



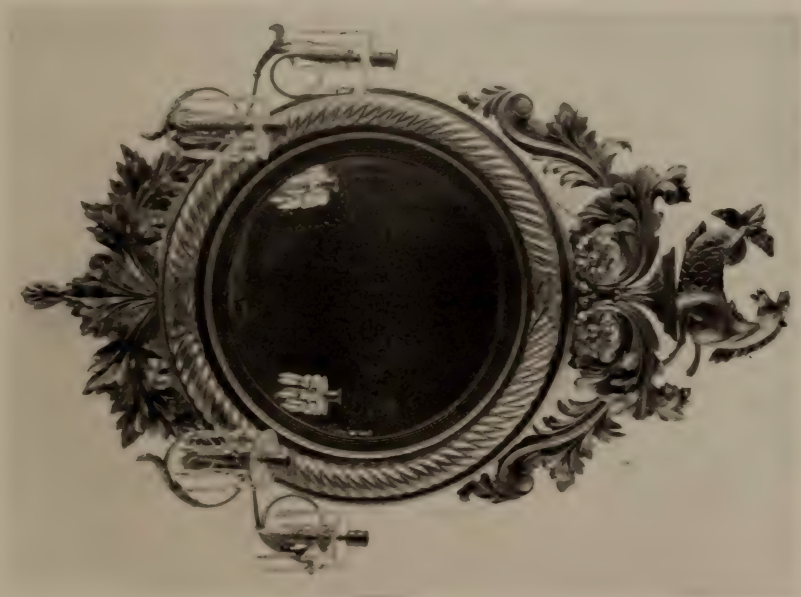
B. MIRROR BY JOHN ELLIOTT & SONS, 1864-99
By Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Museum



AN EXHIBITION ROOM AT THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM, MEMORIAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA



A. GILDED MIRROR OF ADAM STYLE, 1785-1800



B. GILDED GIRANDOLE WITH FOUR LIGHTS. C. 1800

By Courtesy of Howard Reissnyder, Esq.
Photographs by Dillon

PLATE 138



ACCESSORIES AND FURNITURE AT THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM, MEMORIAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA

example, the firm continued the general style till the Chippendale mode was almost, temporarily, forgotten. But in England itself the elaborately Rococo Chippendale mirror (not made here) continued in use through the classic years almost to the end of the eighteenth century. It will then be seen that it is well not to be too puristic, though it is better that accessories should generally accord.

Both of the mirrors appearing in the frontispiece are of the Georgian style but current from 1750 to 1775 or even later.

That in Plate 136 has a rounded pediment and shows a rather more classic tendency. It belonged to Joshua Humphreys who built six frigates for the American government.

The mirror occurring in Plate 43 (1790-1800) preserves many of the former characteristics but in its upper portion takes on features next to be mentioned.

The Captain Cook room (Plate 130) contains an English Adam mirror with accompanying sconces. Many American derivations were made through the Hepplewhite-Sheraton régime and one of them appears in Plate 137 A. The ornament of all these Adam mirrors was delicate and of gilded composition, on wire, and hence they are often called "Filagree mirrors."

From about 1800 on we find the girandole or circular mirror with lights, to which are often added glass pendants. These are exceedingly decorative. The dolphin or else the sea-horse, as in the example illustrated in Plate 137 B, seem to have been favourite ornaments.

Plate 138 shows not only the very familiar long gilded mantel-mirror so often miscalled "Colonial" and really of the late Empire style, but also a lovely

example of the earlier classic mirror of our *Directoire* period. In light tint or white, painted on the reverse of the glass frame-insets, and gold, with delicately painted headings and great refinement of form and detail, this is one of the most beautiful of styles. Another excellent mirror, with painted heading, and of the *Directoire* and early Empire years, occurs in Plate 46.

ACCESSORIES OF THE CHIPPENDALE AND FEDERAL STYLES

We may now proceed with the accessories of our best periods, and it will greatly simplify an understanding of them to remember that in general they follow the characteristics of each style—which we have already seen in furniture and architecture—and are therefore not difficult to classify.

An example of this is the tall clock illustrated in Plate 139 and made by E. Duffield, the executor of Benjamin Franklin, and its case by some one of the famous group of Philadelphia cabinet-makers of the Chippendale period. Here again we have the characteristic details of the highboys—scrolled pediment with flower rosettes and carved Rococo central ornament. The quarter-section corner-columns and ogee bracket-feet appear as well. Later cases naturally followed the Hepplewhite-Sheraton style. In the frontispiece will be seen examples of the mantel and “banjo” clocks. Small portable or table clocks were made very early—by about the beginning of the eighteenth century—but most of these attractive mantel clocks and also the banjo style are of the early nineteenth century—after the war of 1812. The style of mantel-clock appearing in Plate 140 is of 1820-30.

A fire-screen with fine and unusual base will be



TALL CLOCK BY E. DUFFIELD
By Courtesy Howard Reifsnyder, Esq.
Photograph by Whitenack



CLOCK OF 18.0-30. FLUID LAMPS, AND OLD PRINTS
By Courtesy of Howard Reifsnnyder, Esq.
Photograph by Dillon

seen in the frontispiece, and in this picture also appears a decorative feature commonly neglected but of which other illustrations appear here—the wall-bracket. The pair in the Philadelphia Room (frontispiece) are of shell pattern and Chippendale period. Those with the chest-of-drawers and mirror of 1790–1800 in Plate 43 are Chippendale Rococo, while two of varying size and pattern, but both classic, accompany the superb late Sheraton dressing-table in Plate 78. The latter came from the celebrated Burd house in Philadelphia, long since demolished. The Chippendale brackets were bought from a previous American possessor but are believed to be of English make.

Our forefathers must have found illumination for social functions an expensive business, for we read of drawing-rooms ablaze with candlelight. There were brass or crystal chandeliers such as that in the illustration of Kenmore (Plate 131), side lights, and the cut glass lustre candelabra like those appearing on the mantel in Plate 138. Several of the illustrations show lamps for the burning of fluid and a lamp of Empire design is seen in Plate 100. Floor standards holding several candles were occasionally used. Sheffield and brass candlesticks were of course very usual.

Except for the modern cheap reproductive processes we possess no advantage over our ancestors in the providing of pictures for our walls, and these facilities were far outweighed by conditions obtaining in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The now practically discontinued arts of steel and copper engraving, mezzotint, and the type of colour-printing then in use were at their highest development, and prints for which we would now have to pay hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars were then obtainable at reasonable figures. All these, including the

lovely colour-prints after paintings by Gainsborough, Reynolds, and Romney of England and such masters of *genre* as Fragonard, Boucher, Huet, and Lavreince of France, were then accessible through importation by enterprising dealers here. The writer himself possesses a fine impression of John Browne's engraving of Claude Lorrain's *Cephalus and Procris*, 1779, which formerly hung in an old house in Germantown. Such classical subjects were naturally favourites all through the early years of our independence.

In painting, the family portrait was of course prominent. It was not every house that could boast a Stuart, a Trumbull, or a Copley, but there were other capable men, and many whose work can only, at the best, be considered "quaint."

The popularity of the St. Memin portraits may be judged from the number that still remain. Some portraits were painted in water-colours and there were several excellent miniaturists of American birth.

Americans travelling abroad frequently brought home with them foreign paintings, especially copies of the work of the old masters.

But rampant above all upon the walls of the early nineteenth century was the patriotic print. A few of them are shown in illustrations here, but in number they must have extended into hundreds of subjects.

Modern Americans seem at last to be overcoming their timidity in the use of colour. Certainly the interpretation too often given by the usual householder to his so-called "Colonial" home has been totally wrong in this respect: our forebears, and particularly those of cultivated tastes, knew no such fear, though probably strict Puritans and Quakers were conservative in its use. Every opportunity occurred for the employment of colour—furniture-coverings, curtains,

rugs, bed-draperies and coverlets, often in wall-paper; in fire-screens and other embroideries, pictures, framed samplers, pottery, and the like; while the sheen of metal and of glass gleamed from polished silver and brass-ware, from copper and pewter, from candle-sticks, andirons, mirrors, and frames.

Decorative textiles afford the largest surfaces of colour; and for these America drew upon the resources of the world. This says it all: for whatever was used in England, France, Italy, or China was pretty sure to find its echo here. Probably the number of historic tapestries was very small, but needlework was employed, and richness was obtained by the use of silks, satins, brocades, damasks, brocatelles, Genoa velvets, and leather. Printed fabrics were much in vogue, including the famous *toile de Jouy*. India prints for hangings and coverlets, with the tree-of-life and other most attractive designs in colours, had been in use for years and in this period were made in Philadelphia by John Hewson, a protégé of Franklin, by 1774, and a little later by several others. All these fabrics recur in profusion in inventories, letters, descriptions, and advertisements that still survive. Gaily flowered satins, yellow damask, red brocades or brocatelles, crimson and yellow or blue and silver silks—such were a few of the materials in use. Italy was famous for its velvets and France for its silks, and one of the elaborate patterns of the later years of the eighteenth century is shown in Plate 94 A in the contemporary silk covering of a French *Directoire* chair, by permission of William Helburn, Inc. But stripes, small figures, and self-coloured damasks and brocades were in use as well. Horsehair, often patterned, was a favourite covering, as we who in our childhood have slipped off

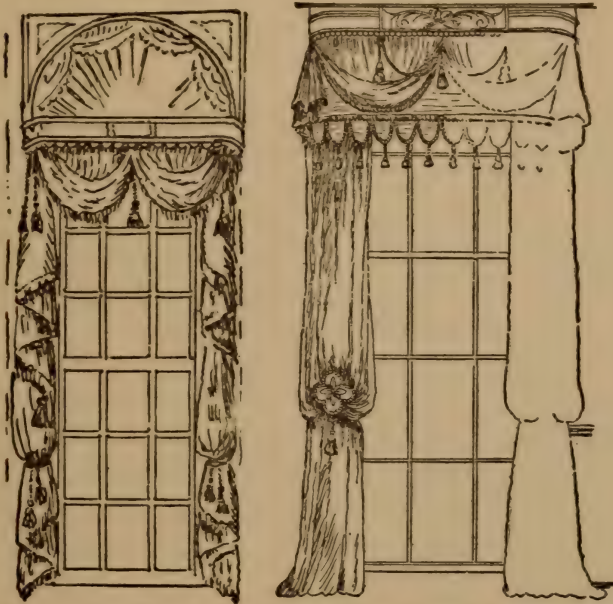
ancient family sofas and bumped our heads may very well remember.

European manufacturers were enterprising in seizing upon the opportunity offered by our patriotism, and they not only furnished us with draperies bearing such *motifs* but with faience, pictures, busts, mirrors, and wall-papers of like character.

In our later period, when the influence of the Napoleonic decoration of the Consulate and Empire had its effect upon our decoration, colouring often became less harmonious. That of the Stevens interior illustrated in Plate 134 is as follows: walls, grey; the carpet, a strong green; furniture-coverings and pillows, blue. The curtains of the cabinet in the farther room are rose, and it would have been well to have imported a little of that hue into the nearer portion. The ugly Pompeian brickish red was a favourite under the French Empire and we may be thankful that it was not used in this interior. In the water-colour drawing of it the lattice windows are uncurtained. A quite thorough combing of likely sources has not yet brought to light contemporary illustrations of much value showing the curtain-arrangements of our earlier years, and so we are forced to rely upon descriptions and our knowledge of the originals of our styles. These were Ackermann's *Repository*, the furniture-books, and such volumes as George D. Smith's "Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide," which sums up the modes he had been using. All these were English, all frankly followed the French fashion, and all were highly elaborate. I give two tracings from Sheraton's "Drawing-Book," the plates being dated 1792 and 93. In our American records we read of "festoons," and here, ladies and gentlemen, are festoons!

It is unlikely that these designs were fully carried

out here—they would have been adapted and simplified. We may be quite sure that in our best houses the arrangement consisted of long heavy curtains with valance and often an added cornice. Light glass-curtains were used with them. The long curtains would have ornamental bands or be looped with cords and tassels. The valance might be plain, shaped,



CURTAIN DESIGNS, DATED 1792-93, FROM SHERATON'S "DRAWING-BOOK "

festooned, or draped, and was often of more ornamental material than the curtains. Fringes and tassels would be frequent as "trim."

Another style that we know from Mr. Halsey to have been widely used was the draping of the heavy curtains over a long gilded arrow or spear, supported as is a curtain pole, across the top of the window. The curtains hung at the sides in the usual manner. This

is the arrangement appearing in the Haverhill Parlour in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum; and indeed the curtaining of all those historic rooms was carefully studied and will prove an excellent guide. They are illustrated and described in "Houses of Our Ancestors" by R. T. Haines Halsey and Elizabeth Tower.

The materials used were those previously mentioned and in handsome designs and colourings. After 1790 design was of classic character.

Mr. Halsey also tells us that Venetian blinds appeared about 1767.

As the lists of American silversmiths and pewterers extend to many printed pages, it is rather surprising that the makers of china and glassware were, comparatively, so few. For the most part and for the finer grades we relied upon importation, and, as with fabrics, we laid the best producing sources under contribution. We all know of the quantities of china brought in our trading-ships from the country that gave the ware its name, and from England and France we secured not only table-ware but fine porcelain vases, figures and ceramic portraits. Many pieces of the patriotic character previously mentioned were made especially for this market.

It is hoped that the authentic furniture and decoration appearing in this volume may give the reader a more adequate idea than he previously possessed of the beauty, the charm, and the dignity of the American home of our forebears.

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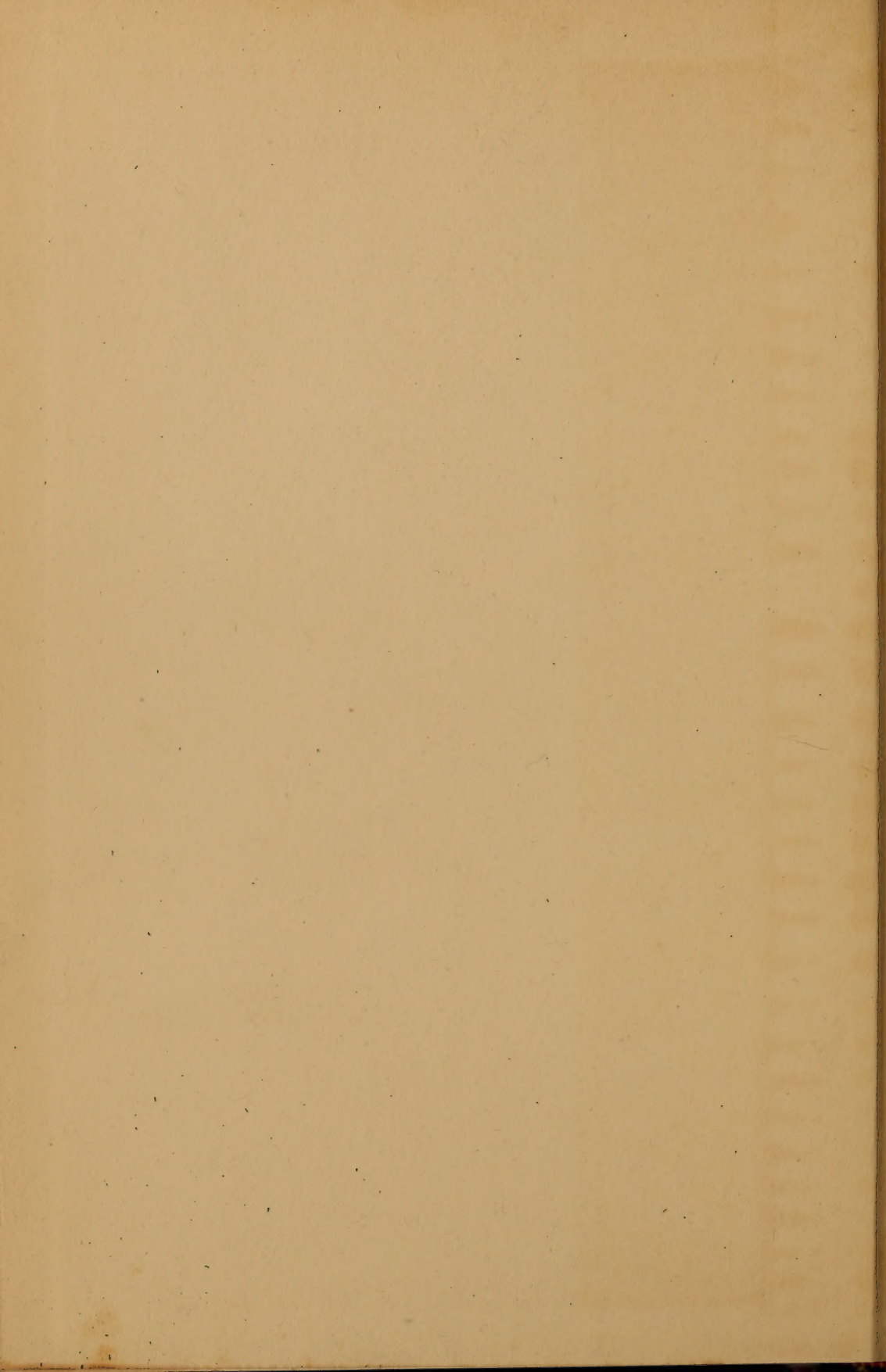
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